



How to Write English

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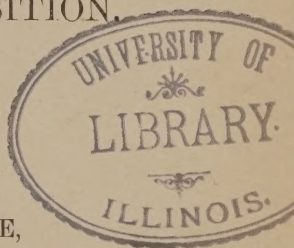
A PRACTICAL TREATISE ON

ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

BY

A. ARTHUR READE,

EDITOR OF "STUDY AND STIMULANTS."



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PREFACE.

HAVING for some years taken considerable interest in the study of English Composition, and being convinced both of its importance, and of the difficulties which attend its pursuit by students, I have, in the following pages, aimed at making the subject more attractive to the young. By giving illustrations of the toils of authorship, I hope to stimulate the beginner to excellence. My aim throughout has been to steer a middle course between the dry and uninviting grammar on the one hand, and the more bulky, exhaustive treatise on the other.

While not put forth as professing to be a complete text-book, this treatise has been chiefly designed to meet the wants of elder scholars and pupil-teachers, whose defects in Composition have been so often exposed by Her Majesty's Inspectors. I anticipate that the rules given will help students to write with clearness, correctness, and energy.

From the numerous requests which have reached me from young men for hints in debating, I venture to believe that the chapter on Controversy, and the list of questions for discussion, are likely to meet the wants of many young debaters.

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ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

WHILST not underrating the value of other branches of education, we think English Composition ought to take a high place in the list of subjects taught in our schools and colleges. To be able to write one's own language correctly and elegantly, is surely of more value than to be able to write or speak a foreign language. The late Sir William Fairbairn declared himself unable to determine whether he wrote or spoke correctly. His schoolmaster, he said, was well qualified to teach English, but it was considered not only non-essential, but as standing in the way of other branches of education. In some schools the thorough study of English is even yet absolutely neglected ; in others, grammar is taught theoretically, and children are bewildered by the distinctions between distributive, quantitative, and qualitative nouns. Their ignorance of the rules of composition, and their inability "to set down in simple grammatical sentences, with some regard to sequence, the recollections of observations of a natural object frequently seen," are attributable, in part, to the too mechanical nature of the instruction which the "Revised Code" fosters and necessitates. Scarcely a report of Her Majesty's Inspectors appears which does not contain some reference to faulty composition.

In his last report (1881), the Rev. H. G. Alington says : "The worst results are in the most popular subject—literature; and the failures are almost entirely in composition, which appears to have been generally neglected." Mr. Codd declares, "The composition is, for the most part, very unsatisfactory. The children have but little idea of punctuation, and are in doubt as to when to use a capital letter. The composition, in fact, does not appear to have sufficient attention paid to it. I very rarely get a piece of paraphrase even moderately done. In many cases a grotesque rearrangement of the words is all that is attempted." Even from Scotland similar complaints are made. Dr. Kerr says: "Composition is taught with very various success. In too many cases correct structure, punctuation, and the use of capitals, do not receive sufficient attention." Mr. Munro admits that the exercises in composition of pupil-teachers "are often good," but declares that they are "seldom without certain defects. These are, (1) bad arrangement; (2) poverty of ideas and vocabulary; (3) inelegant phraseology and provincialisms."

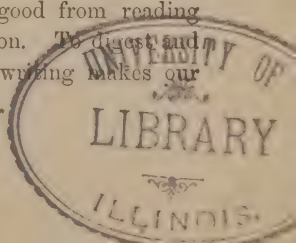
A knowledge of the theory of grammar, of its technicalities, is, of course, valuable; but experience shows that tens of thousands of people, who have never learned the science of grammar from school books, speak and write English without violating its rules.* They have read the best writers, heard the best speakers, and lived in the society of the educated. From the study of Shakspeare alone, and while in prison, Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, derived his wonderful

* "I will not say it positively, but I have a notion that if all the best speakers and writers that we have, unless they happen to be somewhat young, were examined in English Grammar by a sharp Board-school boy, most of them would be plucked."—Mr. D. Nasmith, LL.D., in *Educational Times*, March, 1881."

knowledge of English. No one could be supposed less likely to become an author than John Bunyan. He could scarcely write his name, and had never studied the art of composition. Almost the only books he had read were the Bible, and Fox's "Book of Martyrs." Yet he wrote, and in prison, too, a book which has gone through more editions than any other with the exception of the Bible—a book respecting which Macaulay declared: "There is no book in our literature on which we would so readily stake the fame of the unpolluted English language." This wonderful book is the "Pilgrim's Progress." Still, the study of the art of composition must not be thought needless because Bunyan never studied it.

Speaking of Keats's style, De Quincey, who is considered a master of prose, remarked that if there is one thing which, next to the flag of his country and its honour, should be holy in the eyes of a young poet, it is his native tongue. "He should spend," added De Quincey, "the third part of his life in studying the language and cultivating its resources. He should be willing to pluck out his right eye, or circumnavigate the globe, if by such a sacrifice, and such an exertion, he could attain to greater purity, precision, compass, or idiomatic energy of diction." "The noblest literary study of an Englishman," remarks an American professor, "is the study of the English language. The noblest literary gain of the educated man is the power of wielding that language well." "Since," said Locke, "it is English that an English gentleman will have constant use of, that is the language he should chiefly cultivate, and wherein most care should be taken to polish and perfect his style."

As an instrument of culture, composition holds a high place, for we cannot gain the greatest good from reading unless we practise ourselves in composition. To digest and arrange our ideas we must write; for writing makes our



conceptions clearer, and adds to our stock of ideas. The mere exercise of composition is, in fact, beneficial to the mind. It is equally beneficial in every relationship in life. What Channing said of speaking is true also of writing: "A man who cannot open his lips without breaking a rule of grammar; without showing in his dialect, or brogue, or uncouth tones, his want of cultivation; or without darkening his meaning by a confused, unskilful mode of communication, cannot take the place to which perhaps his native good sense entitles him."

II.—THE LAWS OF WRITING.

The first need of a writer is to have something to say, some thought which calls for expression, some information to give, some knowledge to impart. To this end he should read, think, and observe. He should follow the example of the best writers, and theirs only. Thus let him lay in his stores. Pliny read nothing without making extracts. Bentley, who died in 1742, whom Macaulay declares to have been the greatest scholar that had appeared since the revival of learning, seeing his son reading a novel, asked, "What is the use of reading a book you cannot quote?" Professor Blackie advises students to interleave some books, and make indexes to others, so as to tabulate their knowledge for apt and ready reference. A common-place book and an *Index Rerum* should be in the possession of every student. In the former he should enter his thoughts as they arise. Thoughts are fleeting; unless they are at once recorded they leave us, seldom to return. Before Dr. Johnson commenced his "Rambler," he had collected in a common-place book a variety of hints for essays on different subjects. Southey did the same; and it may truthfully be said that scarcely

any writer of experience fails to note illustrations and arguments as they arise, and to tabulate them for ready reference. When Gibbon wanted information on any particular subject he wrote down all that he knew about it ; then he consulted all the books in his library which were likely to yield material, laying them open before him on his table, and making the reading his own. This is the method of many, and it is one which every essayist would do well to adopt. Before Macaulay began his "History of England" he had a large store of accurate historical knowledge. "I wish," said Lord Melbourne, "that I could be as certain of anything as Macaulay is of everything." Yet he underwent the most laborious researches to make his information complete. He ransacked libraries, piles of blue-books, and bundles of moth-eaten newspapers ; pored over illegible manuscripts, stupid stories, and doggerel verses. Gibbon spent about twenty-three years in the construction of his "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," from the time he first conceived the idea, sitting amidst the ruins of the "Eternal City," while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, to the date of its completion in the retirement of the little Swiss village of Lausaune.

Motley spent ten years in preparing his "History of the Netherlands" and his "Dutch Republic," and Oliver Wendell Holmes thus writes respecting that great historian : "His work, when not in his own library, was in the Archives of the Netherlands, Brussels, Paris, and English State Paper Office, and the British Museum, where he made his own researches, patiently and laboriously consulting original manuscripts and reading masses of correspondence. After his material had been thus painfully and toilfully amassed, the writing of his own story was always done at home, and his mind, having digested the necessary matter, always

poured itself forth in writing so copiously that his revision was chiefly devoted to reducing the over-abundance. He never shrank from any of the drudgery of preparation."

The great work of Saint Beuve's life, the history of Port Royal, cost him thirty years of labour; it originated in a course of lectures at Lausanne, in 1837, and the final and complete edition appeared in 1867. He was not satisfied with getting to the bottom of his subject—with penetrating the genius and nature of every one of those connected with that tragical history; he ended by knowing them as we know those with whom we are in daily intercourse, and by exciting in his readers the same intensity of life and interest which is the predominant quality of his work. Balzac, the great French novelist, visited the places he wanted to describe. If he laid the scene of a novel in any little country town, he went thither, and returned, so laden with notes and sketches, that the inhabitants believed that one of their number had betrayed them. Of Charles Kingsley, one of his publishers writes: "It was my good fortune to be staying with him through the summer in which the greater part of '*Hypatia*' was written. I was especially struck, not only with his power of work, but with the extraordinary pains he took to be accurate in detail. We spent one whole day in searching the four folio volumes of Synesius for a fact he thought was there."

Possessing a most retentive memory and a vivid imagination, Sir Walter Scott trusted to neither, when he could trace out the facts themselves by paying a visit to a scene, or by hunting up an o'd ballad or a tradition. Refusing to give ten minutes of his leisure to lay down the plot of a novel, we are told that he never hesitated a moment to give up the leisure of a week to settle a point of history, or to gather the details of a bit of scenery which he

was thinking of working into a poem or a novel. When not at work upon one of his novels, he was frequently found by Lockhart in the Advocates' Library, at Edinburgh, poring over maps and gazetteers with care and anxiety ; and his own letters to Ballantyne, attest the scrupulous nicety with which he hunted up his facts.

From these examples, the importance of the common-place book and of accurate statement is clear.

Before sitting down to write, the student would do well to compose in his own mind, instead of composing as he writes. Writing becomes a dreary task when the writer has to wait for thoughts. Of that genial essayist, Charles Lamb, it is said that he never sat at his desk to think. This was the work of his, apparently, purposeless strolls in the Strand, Fleet Street, or the Hertfordshire meadows ; for walking was the only recreation he allowed himself. To an enquiry as to when Scott did his thinking, the great novelist replied : " Oh, I lie *simmering* over things for an hour or so before I get up, and there's the time I am dressing to overhaul my half-sleeping, half-waking *projet de chapitre*, and when I put paper before me, it is commonly run off pretty easily."

It was the habit of Charles Kingsley to master his subject, whether book or sermon, before putting pen to paper. His thinking was done mostly in the open air, in his garden—on the moor, or by the side of a lonely trout stream ; and his writing was done by his wife from his dictation, while he paced up and down the floor of his study. Of Victor Hugo it is said, that after turning and returning a drama, a romance, or a poem, in his head, sometimes for a year, he would suddenly set to work, and continue working until he had finished. Each of his dramas was written within a fortnight, and at times, he would produce an act in verse in a single day, but an act which he had been revolving in his mind for six

months. Bloomfield, the poet, said that nearly one half of the "Farmer's Boy" was composed, revised, and corrected, without writing down a word of it, and while working at his trade of shoemaking.

III.—THE WRITER'S VOCABULARY.

In order to obtain a copious vocabulary and facility of expression, translation from a foreign language is advised by most writers on composition. Dr. Angus, for example, urges the student first to read a foreign work, and then to re-write, in his own words, its favourite passages. Let him fully describe objects, scenes, occurrences, characters, literally and figuratively, now in a style richly florid, and now in a style severely chaste, till he has acquired the habit of saying the same thing in a dozen different ways—a great snare, he adds, but also a great gain. Others of our best writers commend translation as a help to the acquisition of copiousness, fluency, and mastery of words.

Pliny advised translating Greek into Latin, or Latin into Greek. By this, he said, you acquire propriety and dignity of expression, an abundant choice of the beauties of style, power in description, and, in the imitation of the best models, a facility of creating such models for yourself. Besides, that which may escape you when you read, cannot escape you when you translate. Sir Walter Scott advised his son to exercise himself frequently in trying to make translations of the passages that most favourably struck him, and to invest the sense of Tacitus in as good English as he could. He considered that he would thus gain a command of his own language, which would be quite unattainable by any person who had not studied English composition in early life.

Southey declared that he derived considerable advantage

from the practice of sometimes translating, sometimes abridging, the historical books read at the Westminster School. Macaulay considered that Pitt's classical studies had the effect of enriching his English vocabulary, and of making him wonderfully expert in the art of constructing English sentences. We are told that Pitt's practice was to look over a page or two pages of a Greek or Latin author, to make himself master of the meaning, and then to read the passage straight off into his own language. Macaulay thought it was not strange that a young man of great abilities,—who had been exercised daily in this way during ten years, should have acquired an almost unrivalled power of putting his thoughts, without premeditation, into words, well selected and well arranged. Of Robertson, the historian, Lord Brougham said that translations from the classics, and especially from the Greek, formed a considerable part of his labours. Robertson believed translating to be well calculated to give an accurate knowledge of our own language, by obliging us to weigh the shades of difference between words or phrases, and to find the expression, whether by the selection of the terms or the turning of the idiom, which is required for a given meaning; whereas, when composing originally, the idea may be varied in order to suit the diction which most readily presents itself.

Poetical exercises have been commended on the same principle as translations from foreign languages. "One thing I do know," wrote Southey, "to write poetry is the best preparation for writing prose. The verse maker acquires the habit of weighing the meanings and qualities of words, until he comes to know, as if by intuition, what particular word will best fit into the sentence. People talk of my style! I have only endeavoured to write plain English, and to put my thoughts into language which every one can

understand." On another occasion Southey wrote :—"I am glad that you sometimes write verses, because if ever you become a prose writer, you will find the great advantage of having written poetry. No poet ever becomes a mannerist in prose, nor falls into those tricks of style which show that the writer is always labouring to produce effect."

The practice of reporting speeches, sermons, and lectures is also helpful to the acquisition of copiousness. A Scotch ploughman, living at Banff, in describing how he gained a knowledge of Phonography, said that he took down in shorthand summaries from some of the best English authors, then, translated them and compared them with the originals. This mode of practice, he says, improved him in the art of composition, as well as in the art of Phonography. It also tended to occupy his mind intellectually, so that he did not look upon learning Phonography as mere pen practice, but as an intellectual exercise also. In this way he acquired a degree of proficiency in composition which he would never have attained otherwise. Composition was a branch of education which he did not learn at school, and he was convinced that he would not in after life have bestowed the time and labour necessary to acquire the art, had he not learned it along with Phonography. He believed that the student of English would derive great benefit from its study. Phonography gives a strong impulse to English Composition, and helps largely towards begetting in the student a readiness of thought, exact and clear expression.

. V.—ON TAKING PAINS.

Excellence in writing, as in speaking, can be attained only by practice and by careful revision. It is an art, and like all other arts, needs cultivating. Pope said :—

“True ease in writing comes from *art*, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.”

Dr. Johnson advised every young man beginning to compose to do it as fast as he could, and considered it much more difficult to improve in speed than in accuracy.

Southey gave similar advice—to write down one's thoughts as they arise and correct at leisure. The student cannot begin to do this too early. A man, said Dr. Johnson, should write soon, for if he waits till his judgment is matured, his inability, through want of practice, to express his conceptions, will make the disproportion so great between what he sees and what he can attain, that he will probably be discouraged from writing at all. He should not, however, be satisfied with what he has written until it is as good as he can make it. This is a hard lesson and one which cannot be learned too early. “Excellence,” remarked Sir Joshua Reynolds, “is never granted to man but as the reward of labour.” A common mistake is made when great books are attributed to the genius of their authors. Genius their authors may have, but they themselves attribute their success to hard labour alone. Carlyle, we think, held that genius is the faculty of taking pains. Sydney Smith wrote: “The multitude cry out ‘A miracle of genius!’ ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘A man proves a miracle of genius because he has been a miracle of labour.’”

Charles Dickens declared it impossible that any natural or improved ability could claim immunity from the companionship of the steady plain hard-working qualities, and hope to gain its end. It is evident from a glimpse at his manuscripts, which form part of the Forster collection in the South Kensington Museum, that Dickens wrote with the greatest care, and scrupulously revised his writing in order to render each sentence as perfect and effective as possible; and Sir Arthur

Hells held that a sight of the manuscripts of Dickens would cure anybody of the idle and presumptuous notion that men of genius require no forethought or preparation for their greatest efforts. Sir Isaac Newton wrote his "Chronology" fifteen times over before he was satisfied with it, and Gibbon his memoir nine times. Dr. Johnson bestowed a great deal of labour upon his writing. Being asked if he could make his "Ramblers" better, he replied that "he could make the best of them better." Of Southey, Professor Dowden tells us: "He wrote at a moderate pace; re-wrote; wrote a third time if it seemed desirable, and corrected with minute supervision. He accomplished so much, not because he produced with unexampled rapidity, but because he worked regularly, and never fell into a mood of apathy or ennui." De Quincey is reported to have bestowed incredible labour upon his works, re-writing some pages of his "Confessions of an Opium Eater" not fewer than sixty times. He frequently re-modelled and re-wrote an article several times over before he was satisfied with it.

Our best poets have been equally painstaking. Ben Jonson declared, contrary to the popular opinion, "that a good poet's *made*, as well as born." So, also, Wordsworth:—

"O many are the poets that are sown.
By nature, men endowed with highest gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine :
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
Which, in the docile season of their youth,
It was denied them to acquire through lack
Of culture, and the inspiring aid of books."

It is said that Goldsmith first sketched part of the plan of the poem of the "Deserted Village" in prose, and set down his ideas; then he corrected them and substituted others which seemed better. A neighbour, calling on him one

morning, learned that Goldsmith had that morning written these ten lines :—

“Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease !
 Seats of my youth, where every sport could please !
 How often have I loitered o’er thy green,
 Where humble happiness endeared each scene.
 How often have I paused on every charm,
 The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
 The never failing brook, the busy mill,
 The decent church that topped the neighbouring hill
 The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
 For talking age, and whispering lovers made.”

“Come,” said he, “let me tell you that this is no bad morning’s work.”

Mr. William Black says that any young writer who may imagine the power of clear and concise literary expression to come by nature, cannot do better than study in Cunningham’s collection of Goldsmith’s writings, the continual and minute observations which the author considered necessary, even after the first edition, sometimes when the second and third editions had been published. Many of these, especially in the poetical works, were merely improvements in sound, suggested by a singularly sensitive ear, as when he altered the line—

“Amidst the ruins, heedless of the dead.”

which appeared in the first three editions of the “Traveller,” into

“There is a ruin, heedless of the dead.”

which appeared in the fourth edition. But the majority of the omissions and corrections were prompted by a careful taste, which abhorred everything redundant and slovenly.

In every new edition of Tennyson’s poems, changes for the better are observed. For instance, *many* at the end of one

of his poems has been changed to *thousand*, which is far more definite. For the purpose of giving a concrete idea, a *rich* man has been called a *Cæsus*, and a *wise* man a *Solomon*.

Pope published nothing until it had been a year or two before him, and even then the printer's proofs were very full of alterations. On one occasion, his publisher thought it better to have the whole "re-composed" than make the corrections. Of Burns's most popular song, "*The Banks o' Doon*," the latest edition of his works gives three different versions. In the first version the first verse reads:—

"Sweet are the banks, the banks of Doon,
The spreading flowers are fair,
And everything is blythe and glad,
But I am fu' of care."

The second version, which is considered the best, reads:—

"Ye flowery banks o' bonnie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' of care!"

There cannot be a doubt which is the better verse, the more musical, the more finished. Although Burns was a great genius, he spared no pains to do his best. He believed "that the knack, the aptitude to learn the Muse's trade is a gift bestowed by Him who forms the secret bias of the soul," but also that "excellence in the profession is the fruit of industry, attention, labour, and pains; at least," he added, "I am resolved to try my doctrine by the test of experience."

Balzac did not grudge devoting a week to a page. His method of composition was unique. A French publisher used to tell an amusing story of Balzac, who had promised to contribute to his projected periodical, but did not keep his promise. At last, on the eve of publication, the printer's messenger was sent to Balzac's lodgings with strict instructions

not to come back empty-handed. The messenger returned with three or four slips of paper on which a few lines had been hastily scribbled. The publisher, however, knew his man. The manuscript was speedily in type, and a proof despatched to the author. Balzac returned it double the former size, with *e*asures, corrections, and additions, crossing each other between the lines in inextricable confusion. Eight times was the process repeated, and at last the memorable "monograph" entitled, "*Nos Epiciers*," was the result. "The corrections of that proof," the publisher added, "cost me £40, but I sold twenty thousand copies of the first number."

Of modern writers who have toiled at their composition, Macaulay must be placed among the first; he is said to have spent nineteen working days over thirty octavo pages, and ended by humbly acknowledging that the result was not to his mind. His biographer—Mr. G. O. Trevelyan—tells us how, after repeated revisions, having satisfied himself that his writing was as good as he could make it, he would submit it to the severest of all tests, that of being read aloud to others. His punctilious attention to details was prompted by an honest wish to increase the enjoyment, and smooth the difficulties, of those who did him the honour to read his books. He never allowed a sentence to pass muster until it was as good as he could make it. He thought little of re-casting a chapter in order to obtain a more lucid arrangement, and nothing whatever of re-constructing a paragraph for the sake of one happy stroke or apt illustration. As showing what pains he took with his work, the following extract is quoted: "My account of the Highlands is getting into tolerable shape. To-morrow I shall begin to transcribe again, and to polish. What trouble these few pages will have cost me. The great object is, that after all this trouble,

they may read as if they had been spoken off, and may seem to flow as easily as table-talk."

Equally painstaking is Mr. Bancroft, the American historian, for the description of whose method of working we are indebted to the *New York Graphic*:—

"When he commences upon a new volume, he decides first upon the period of time which it shall cover, its scope, and particular features, if any. This plan is put in writing and placed in the hands of his reference secretary, Dr. Frank Austin Scott, a gentleman of unusual qualifications for the position, being a proficient linguist, and, from many years' association with Mr. Bancroft, almost as familiar with history and the details of the work as Mr. Bancroft himself. Next a diary is taken, and under each date are entered, with a bookkeeper's precision, all the occurrences of that time in every corner of the globe, that relate in any respect to the American Republic. With each record are references to the authority on which the record is based; if published, to the volumes and pages; if not, to the original manuscripts which are filed away in Mr. Bancroft's library. In the compilation of this diary, every existing work, document, and paper is consulted; every history or tradition of any reliability is carefully gleaned by Mr. Scott. In the meantime Mr. Bancroft employs himself in reading up on these events, sifting the chaff from the wheat, detecting the spurious, and dictating to his writing secretary the suggestions that occur to him, and the opinions deduced from the study. The diary being finished, a memorandum book is taken, and its pages are divided into classification for topics; this is called a topic-book. The classifications are not very numerous, the heads being somewhat as follows: 'Washington,' 'Army,' 'Finance,' 'Domestic Affairs,' 'Foreign Affairs,' 'Campaigns,' 'Congress;' under each of these heads is compiled all the information contained in the diary relating to each particular topic; so that, for example, when Mr. Bancroft wants to write a chapter on the finance of the government at the time of which he is treating, he has all the facts that can be gained from every possible source, condensed and classified in their chronological order; *all histories in every language are consulted*; all biographies, records, essays, speeches, and papers; transcripts of all existing public documents in the archives of the American, English, French, and German Governments, and ~~so~~ all private papers and correspondence written at the time. When this

is completed by Mr. Scott—and it takes months sometimes to exhaust a single topic—Mr. Bancroft familiarises himself with the contents of the memorandum book, marking passages of importance, making cross references for his own convenience, and indexing the events himself in the order in which he intends to treat of them. Then he dictates to his writing secretary the text of the volume, and as chapter after chapter is finished, it is laid away to “season” for a time. The matter is then written and re-written, until it suits Mr. Bancroft’s sensitive taste. When he is satisfied with the arrangement, the style and completeness of a chapter, it is sent to his publishers. . . . Mr. Bancroft’s work, compared with the writings of other authors, looks very small as the result of the labours of a lifetime; but this description of his method will give the reader an idea of the vast amount of study, investigation, and thought each volume represents.”

These illustrations of the way in which really great books are written, will, it is hoped, help to remove the false impression that such works are the spontaneous outcome of natural intuition.

V.—ON THE FORMATION OF STYLE.

Students are frequently advised to acquire style in writing. The word is derived from *stylus*, the pointed iron instrument with which the Romans wrote upon their wax-covered tablets. It is often employed by Cicero to denote the manner of expressing thoughts in writing, and is used in that sense in our own time. In the primary necessity for the study of models of style, most authors agree. Gibbons, it is said, studied the style of Blackstone, and Pope formed his style upon that of Dryden. Buckle, the author of the “History of Civilisation,” spent four hours every day in studying style. His method was to read a few pages of Hallam, or Burke, or any other master, and then to write in his own language the substance of his reading; afterwards he compared the two, in order, as he says, “to find out where

it was that I wrote worse than they." His biographer says that Buckle also read the best French authors for the same purpose; and so great was his industry that, although this regular study occupied him only a few years, he never considered that he had attained perfection, but continually studied how to attain further excellence. Even after the publication of his first volume we find the following entries in his diary: "Read Burke for his style;" "made notes on style from Whateley and H. Spencer;" "began to read Johnson's English Dictionary to enlarge my vocabulary;" "read Milton's prose works for the style, especially for the vocabulary." Describing how he acquired a good style, the late Rev. Thomas Binney, a famous preacher, said:—

"I read many of the best authors, and I wrote largely both poetry and prose; and I did so with much painstaking. I laboured to acquire a good style of expressiveness, as well as merely to express my thoughts. Some of the plans I pursued were rather odd, and produced odd results. I read the whole of Johnson's 'Rasselas,' put down all the new words I met with—and they were a good many—with their proper meanings, and then I wrote essays in imitation of Johnson, and used them up. I did the same with Thomson's 'Seasons,' and wrote blank verse to use *his* words, and also to acquire something of music and rhythm. And so I went on, sometimes writing long poems in heroic verse; one on the 'Being of a God,' another in two or three 'books,' in blank verse, in imitation of 'Paradise Lost.' I wrote essays on the immortality of the soul, sermons, a tragedy in three acts, and other things very wonderful in their way. I think I can say I never fancied myself a poet or a philosopher; but I wrote on and on to acquire the power to write with readiness, and I say to you, with a full conviction of the truth of what I say, that having lived to gain some little reputation as a writer, I attribute all my success to what I did for myself, and to the habits I formed during those years to which I have thus referred."

There is scarcely a writer of eminence who has not, for purposes of style, made a study of great authors. Sir James Mackintosh divided the history of style into three periods;

the first period extending from Sir Thomas More to Lord Clarendon; the second from the Restoration to the middle of the eighteenth century; the third from the latter part of the eighteenth century, and represented by a school of writers of which Dr. Johnson was the founder. Our own age is the fourth period. It has, as Dr. Angus remarks, all the ease of Addison, with the nervous compactness of Bacon, the sonorousness of Johnson, and the lightness of De Foe. In order to acquire a good style of expression, the best works of the best authors should be studied—Shakespeare, Milton, Addison, Hume, Burke, Cobbett, Macaulay, Buckle, Tennyson, Ruskin, for instance, not with the view of imitating any style, but for purposes of mastery and comparison. A man's style is a transcript of his own character. "Every man," says Lessing, "has his own style, just as every man has his own nose"; and Carlyle declared that no man can change his style any more than he can change his skin. It is hard, indeed, to read Carlyle, much more to imitate his style. The eminent French critic, M. Taine, describes him as "an extraordinary animal, a relict of a lost family, a sort of mastodon in a world not made for him." He remarks that Carlyle—

"Takes everything in a contrary meaning, does violence to everything, expressions and things. With him paradoxes are set down as principles common sense takes the form of absurdity. . . . Carlyle always speaks in riddles: 'logic-choppers' is the name he gives to the analysts of the eighteenth century; 'beaver-science' is his word for the catalogues and classifications of our modern men of science; 'transcendental moonshine' signifies the philosophical and sentimental dreams imported from Germany; the religion of the 'rotatory calabash' means external and *m*echanical religion."

Different people have, of course, different views upon Carlyle, as they have upon other writers. Mr. Russell Lowell, the American minister in London, and author of the

famous "Biglow Papers," says that when he was an undergraduate at Harvard he remembered perfectly a book that was published, and produced in his own mind and nature, he thinks, as great a ferment as it did in those of all his contemporaries. That book was "Sartor Resartus." It was first collected and published by subscription in the year 1836, at Boston, in the United States, and it there received its first appreciation. Mr Lowell also said that when "Sartor Resartus" began to appear in "Fraser's Magazine," the editor received two letters. One was from an Irishman, saying that if that particular kind of stuff was to be continued, he wished his subscription to be instantly stopped. The other was a letter from an American, saying that if the author who had been writing "Sartor Resartus" had written anything else, he wished it might be sent to him. The second letter was from Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, the famed American essayist. Mr. Lowell considers that all modern literature has felt Carlyle's influence, and felt it in a healthy direction. Thackeray said that Carlyle was his master, and Ruskin says the same. No two men are more unlike than Thackeray and Ruskin, and, as Mr. Lowell points out, it shows the universality of Carlyle's influence. Mr. Peter Bayne speaks of Charles Kingsley as having been so profoundly influenced by the writings of Carlyle that he almost lost his personal identity. Carlyle did not always write in his peculiar German-English style, and Mr. Henry Morley considers that this peculiarity increased upon him as his success increased, and that it was a blemish more visible in his later works. His essay on the character of the poetry and life of Burns is "so rare in its excellence, so fine and final in its perfection, that for fifty years it has served as an epitome of what requires to be known respecting the poet, and serves besides as perhaps the finest model in existence of that

species of literary composition in which a symmetrical, complete, satisfactory biography is condensed into an essay."

Turning from Carlyle to Macaulay is like turning from the lurid light of a furnace to the broad clear blaze of the noon-day sun. Carlyle does not seem to have cared to write in a language which everybody could understand. Macaulay, on the other hand, possessed the art of writing what "people will like to read." In a criticism upon his style, Mr. John Morley observes:—

"The first and most obvious secret of Macaulay's place on popular book-shelves is that he has a true genius for narration, and narration will always, in the eyes, not only of our squatters in the Australian bush, but of the many all over the world, stand first among literary gifts. . . . He had an intimate acquaintance with the imaginative literature and the histories of Greece and Rome, with the literature and the history of modern Italy, of France, and of England. Whatever his special subject, he contrives to pour into it, with singular dexterity, a stream of rich, graphic, and telling illustrations from all these widely diversified sources. . . . There has been a great deal of deliberate and systematic imitation of Macaulay, often by clever men who might well have trusted to their own resources. Its most conspicuous vices are easy to imitate, but it is impossible for any one less familiar with literature than Macaulay to reproduce his style effectively, for the reason, that it is before all else the style of great literary knowledge. Macaulay's knowledge was not only very wide, but thoroughly accurate and instantly ready. For this stream of apt illustrations he was indebted to his extraordinary memory, and his rapid eye for contrasts and analogies. They come to the end of his pen as he writes; they are not laboriously hunted out in indexes, and then added by way of after-thought and extraneous interpolation. Hence quotations and references that, in a writer even of equal knowledge, but with his wits less promptly about him, would seem mechanical and awkward, find their place in a page of Macaulay as if by a delightful process of complete assimilation and spontaneous fusion. . . . Again, nobody can have any excuse for not knowing exactly what it is that Macaulay means. . . . He never wrote an obscure sentence, and this may seem a small merit, until we remember of how few writers we could say the same."

Macaulay's style, like Carlyle's, was original. Dean Milman has pointed out that it was eminently his own, but his own not by strange words, or strange collocation of words, by phrases of perpetual occurrence, or the straining after original and striking terms of expression. Its characteristics were vigour and animation, copiousness, clearness—above all, sound English, now a rare excellence. As to its clearness, he said that one may read a sentence of Macaulay twice to judge its full force, never to comprehend its meaning. His English was pure, both in idiom and in words, pure to fastidiousness; not that he discarded or did not make free use of the plainest and most homely terms, but every word must be genuine English, nothing that approached vulgarity, nothing that had not the stamp of popular use, or the authority of sound English writers, nothing unfamiliar to the common ear. He realised his own ideal: "The diligence, the accuracy, and the judgment of Hallam, united to the vivacity and the colouring of Southey,—a history of England written throughout in this manner would be the most fascinating book in the language; it would be more in request at the circulating libraries than the last novel." This was written in 1835, and accurately foretold the fortune of his own history twenty years later.

VI.—ON THE STUDY OF MODELS.

We must study alike from the historian and the novelist. Mr. Peter Bayne expresses the opinion that there is probably no master of English prose whom it is so safe and so profitable to study as a model as Thackeray. He considers that great novelist unsurpassed in nice precision of correspondence between word and meaning, in knowledge of the one right word,

the one idiomatic phrase that he wants, in that true force which rejects all superfluity. He adds, that in imitating authors of more brilliant and paradoxical genius you become a laughable parodist; but you cannot imitate Thackeray too closely, for his whole art is to put the right word in the right place.

Dr. Johnson declared that whoever wished to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the study of Addison. The learned doctor gave very good advice, but like many others, did not follow it, for no two writers wrote more unlike each other. Addison's style was easy and natural; Johnson's, rhetorical and sonorous. One critic says that Johnson's style reminds him of a giant cracking nuts. Goldsmith told Johnson that if he were to write a book about little fishes, he would make them all talk like whales; and Macaulay remarked that Johnson wrote in a style in which no one ever made love, quarrelled, drove bargains, or even thought. When he wrote for his friends, he wrote good strong English; but when he wrote for publication, he "did his sentences into Johnsonese."*

Much may be learned from Dr. Johnson's writings, but his style is bad; and we may say of his, as Porson said o

* One clever writer has lately attempted a defence of Dr. Johnson's pompous style, saying that the sage drew his distinctions as he drew his breath, and that he could not express these distinctions without couching his diction in Latin-born phrases. The answer to this is simple. He drew distinctions with equal subtlety when he was talking, and he expressed them in the homeliest Teutonic. He has had his reward. His *Rambler* lies unread on our book-shelves. His talk, as recorded by Boswell, will be perused every year by thousands of delighted students. Any writer of our day who has a mind to be read a hundred years hence, should lay the lesson to heart.—Oliphant *Old and Middle English*, 1878, p. 589.

Gibbon's, there could not be a better exercise for a student than to turn a page of his writings into English. Two years after Goldsmith's death, his friends erected a tablet to his memory in the poet's corner of Westminster Abbey. Johnson wrote the inscription in Latin, which contains the famous phrase, "He touched nothing that he did not adorn." He was asked to make a few alterations in the original draft, and, in particular, to transform it into the poet's native language. His answer was characteristic: "Any alteration that might be thought necessary he would make with pleasure, but he would never consent to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription!" He made a similar remark on another occasion. A monument having been erected to the memory of Dr. Smollett, Dr. Johnson was consulted as to an inscription for it. Lord Kaimes, the author of the "Elements of Criticism," advised an English inscription. Dr. Johnson treated his counsel with contempt, and declared that an English inscription would be a disgrace to Dr. Smollett. When travelling in Scotland he showed a similar partiality for Latin. Coming to a parish church, he saw the monument of Sir James Macdonald, and on it an inscription in English. He remarked to Boswell, his fellow-traveller, that it should have been in Latin, like everything intended to be universal and permanent.

Macaulay held that the first rule of all writing—that rule to which every other rule is subordinate—is that the words used by the writer shall be such as most fully and precisely convey his meaning to the great body of his readers. We consider this an excellent rule for all writers, and especially for those who wish to communicate knowledge. Roger Ascham, a great English scholar, who lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, said, "He that will write well in any tongue must follow the council of Aristotle, to speak as the

common people speak, to think as wise men think. Many English writers," he added, "use strange words, as Latin, French, and Italian, and do make all things dark and hard." Few writers have carried out Ascham's precept more fully than Bunyan in his "Pilgrim's Progress." In this work he uses the most simple and homely words. Macaulay considered Bunyan's style invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. "His vocabulary," he said, "is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables, yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehement exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator and the divine, this homely dialect of plain working men was perfectly sufficient. There is no book in our literature on which we would so readily stake the fame of the unpolluted English language, no book which shows so well how rich that language is, in its own proper wealth, and how little it has improved by all that it has borrowed."

Ruskin, above all, should be read and studied. He is the great English classic. In perspicuity, in grace, in purity, in picturesqueness, he is unequalled. He is a poet in prose. His "Sesame and Lilies," and his "Crown of Wild Olives," contain the finest passages in the whole range of English prose; the former in the lecture entitled "Queen's Gardens," the latter in the lecture on "War." In a review of "Arrows of the Chase," the *Athenæum* (December 18th, 1880) says:—

"At his worst Mr. Ruskin is a better writer than most men; at his best he is incomparable. He has a magnificent vocabulary, a perfect

and unerring sense of expression, a wonderful instinct of rhythm. He has much to say, and he knows so well how to say it that people are apt to value his sayings even more for their manner's sake than for that of their matter. It is the common lot of most of those who deal in prose, to be either useful at the expense of beauty, or ornamental at the cost of serviceableness. With Mr. Ruskin it is otherwise. To him the instrument of prose is lyre and axe, is lamp and trowel, is a brush to paint with, and a sword to slay, in one. A great artist in speech, he is a living and working exemplification of the theory which holds that English prose is of no particular epoch, but that in all its essentials, and allowing for the influence of current fashions of speech, it is one and the same thing with Shakespeare and with Addison, with Bunyan and with Burke, with Browne, with Bacon, and with Carlyle and Sterne."

In the preface to this book, a preface which the *Athenæum* considers a charming example of his latest manner, and a model of pure, sweet, equable English, Mr. Ruskin says that at one time of his life he was fonder of metaphor and more fertile in simile than he is now, and that he employed both with franker trust in the reader's intelligence. Carefully chosen, they are, he says, always a powerful means of concentration, and he would then dismiss in six words, ("Thistle-down without seeds, and bubbles without odour,") forms of art on which he would now perhaps spend half a page of analytic vituperation. We readily believe Mr. Ruskin when he says that a sentence of "Modern Painters" was written four or five times over in his own hand, "and tried in every word for perhaps an hour—perhaps a forenoon—before it was passed for the printer."

Professor Blackie warns students not to be over anxious about mere style, as if it were a thing that could be cultivated independently of ideas. "Be more careful," he remarks, "that you should have something weighty and pertinent to say, than that you should say things in the most polished and skilful way. There is good sense in what Socrates said to the eleven young Greeks, that if they had

anything to say they would know how to say it; and to the same effect spoke St. Paul to the early Corinthian Christians; and, in these last times, the wise Goethe to the German students:—

Be thine to seek the honest gain,
No shallow sounding fool;
Sound sense finds utterance for itself,
Without the critic's rule;
If to your heart your tongue be true,
Why hunt for words with much ado?

But with this reservation, that you cannot be too diligent in acquiring the habit of expressing your thoughts on paper with that combination of lucid order, graceful ease, pregnant signification, and rich variety, which marks a good style."

With Professor Blackie we heartily agree. A good style should be formed in youth. Inattention to style in early life is the cause of much of the slovenly writing which disgraces our literature. A clear style is a great acquisition. Reviewing Mr. George Grote's history of Greece, the *Times*, whilst speaking very highly of the substantial value of the work, described it as among the very worst of English writings, and added, "Mr. Grote must remember that no man who writes for posterity can afford to neglect the art of composition. The trimmer bark, though less richly laden, will float further down the stream of time, and when so many authors of real ability and learning are competing for every niche in the temple of fame, the coveted place will assuredly be won by style."

·VII.—ENGLISH OR LATIN?

The question arises whether words of Saxon or of Latin origin should be preferred in composition. Dr. Angus well remarks that Anglo-Saxon words are most appropriate when

we describe individual things, natural feelings, domestic life, the poetry of nature ; words of Latin origin when we describe the results of generalisation or of abstraction, the discoveries of science. He illustrates these rules by the following examples: Is it philosophy you discuss? Then "the impenetrability of matter" will be found a better phrase than its Anglo-Saxon equivalent "the unthorough faresomeness of stuff." Is it natural feeling? "Paternal expectations" and "maternal attachment" are less impressive than a "father's hopes" and "mother's love." "In one of my early interviews with Robert Hall, the great Baptist preacher," his biographer, Gregory, said, 'I used the word *felicity* three or four times in rather quick succession. Why do you say *felicity*? he asked. 'Happiness' is a better word, more musical, and genuine English, coming from the Saxon.' 'Not more musical, I think. 'Yes, more musical; and so are words derived from the Saxon generally.' 'My heart is smitten and withered like grass.' There's plaintive music. Listen again. 'Under the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.' There's cheerful music. 'Yes, but rejoice is French. 'True, but all the rest is Saxon, and rejoice is almost out of tune with the other words. Listen again. 'Thou hast delivered my eyes from tears, my soul from death, and my feet from falling.' All Saxon except delivered. I could think of the word *tears* till I wept. Then again, for another noble specimen, and almost all good Saxon-English: 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.' "*
"

* To one striking quality of Mr. Hall's style I must make pointed advertence. I refer to its musical structure. Great writers are as much composers as great musicians. They test the sound of words by

Southey considered Cobbett one of the best writers having a Saxon basis. "He is very much in earnest," he said, "and writes without stopping to pick out pretty words, or round off polished sentences." Carlyle held quite the same opinion. For strength, expressiveness, and majestic movement, what could equal the following lines from Byron's "Destruction of Sennacherib," in which nearly all the words are Anglo-Saxon?

"For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax deadly and chill,
And their hearts beat but once, and forever lay still."

The preacher, as well as the poet, realises the value and the force of English words. The success of Mr. Spurgeon is largely owing to his use of homely but forcible language.

Addressing the students of a business college at New York, the Rev. Dr. Collyer said:—"Do you want to know how I manage to talk to you in this simple Saxon? I read Bunyan, Crusoe, and Goldsmith, when I was a boy, morning, noon and night; all the rest was task work. These were my delight, with the stories in the Bible, and with

a sense as exquisite as that which tries notes of music. They combine words, as the musician blends his notes, into sprightly or solemn movements, into triumphal swells or dying falls. This art is one of the secrets of genius—untaught and uncommunicable—and this Hall possessed in perfection. His sermons are magnificent lyrics; each separate paragraph is a melody, and the periods are like bars in a strain of music. I don't know that he ever wrote a line of poetry, nor am I aware whether he had what is called an ear for music, but the divine spirit of poetry colours his prose, and beyond all rules of musical art—

"His thoughts involuntary move
Harmonious numbers."

—CHRISTOPHER, "Poets of Methodism."

Shakespeare, when at last the mighty master came within our doors. The rest were as senna to me. These were like a well of pure water, and this is the first step I seem to have taken of my own free will toward the pulpit. I must go to Sunday School, but I could pick my books week-days from that little shelf. I took to these as I took to milk, and without having the least idea what I was doing, got the taste for simple words into the very fibre of my nature."

VIII.—ON SIMPLICITY IN STYLE.

First among the characteristics of a good style comes clearness. This quality is held by all authorities to be of the first importance, and the one upon which the utmost pains should be bestowed. "By perspicuity," wrote Quintilian, "care is taken, not merely that the reader may clearly understand, but that he cannot possibly misunderstand." To write clearly, it is absolutely essential to think clearly; for obscurity, which is opposed to perspicuity, often arises from confusion of thought. Perspicuity implies *simplicity*, *brevity*, and *precision*.

It should be the aim of every writer to use words which can be readily understood by those whom he addresses. This is a reading age, but those who want to be read widely, and to be understood, must write so as to give readers as little trouble as possible. To this end they must use special, instead of general, terms, because special terms are more easily understood. They are, it has been well said, grasped by a single act of thought, and the images they call up are definite and precise. On the other hand, general terms necessitate a complex mental act. According to Professor Campbell, the more general the terms

the fainter the picture ; the more special, the brighter the picture ; and he illustrates this principle by the following examples : In the song of Moses, occasioned by the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, the inspired poet, speaking of the Egyptians, says :—

“ They *sank as lead* in the mighty waters.”

which is much more effective than—

“ They *fell as metal* in the mighty waters.

In whichever way expressed, the idea is the same, but the difference in the effect is due to the change from specific to general terms.

Again :—

“ Consider the lilies how they grow ; they toil not, they spin not ; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If, then, God so clothe the grass which to-day is in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will He clothe you ? ”

If we change from *specific* to *general* terms, the verses would read, according to Professor Campbell—

“ Consider the flowers how they gradually increase in their size ; they do no manner of work, and yet I declare to you that no king whatever, in his most splendid habit, is dressed up like them. If, then, God in His providence doth so adorn the vegetable productions which continue but a little time on the land, and are afterwards put into the fire, how much more will He provide clothing for you ? ”

Dr. Morell supplies us with a modern illustration of this rule. A member of a Parliamentary Committee, he says, asks a witness, “ Will you have the goodness to state, for the information of the Committee, what is the ordinary beverage of the industrial population in your locality ? ” He meant, “ What do working men in your part of the country usually drink ? ”

THE USE OF FINE PHRASES IS A VIOLATION OF SIMPLICITY. Whoever wrote the following sentence thought he was writing grandly :—

“The night, now far advanced, was brilliantly bright with radiance of astral and lunar effulgence.”

He meant :—

“The night was far gone, and the moon and the stars were shining brightly.”

Even Mr. Ruskin confesses that he wrote sometimes thus when too young; when he knew only half truths, and was eager to set them forth by what he thought fine words. He says :—

“People used to call me a good writer then ; now they say I can’t write at all, because, for instance, if I think anybody’s house is on fire, I only say, ‘Sir, your house is on fire ;’ whereas formerly I used to say, ‘Sir, the abode in which you probably passed the delightful days of youth is in a state of inflammation,’ and everybody used to like the effect of the two P’s in ‘probably passed,’ and the two D’s in ‘delightful days.’”

Reviewing a book entitled “The Other Side : How it Struck Us,” by C. B. Perry, the London *Examiner* (Oct. 9th, 1879) said :—

“It may be English, but it is penny-a-lining English, to speak of a waiter at the Fifth Avenue Hotel as ‘resplendent in a white wai tcoat,’ or of an ‘elevated railroad,’ as seriously interfering ‘with the amenity of the streets,’ or of boots as ‘pedal integuments.’ The same author speaks of a steamer as a ‘white towering immensity.’”

The *Daily Telegraph* furnishes many illustrations of grotesque and florid writing. If it wants to tell us that twenty-seven years is the average of a miner’s life, it says :—

“The miner’s average tenure of life is a brief twenty-seven summers.”

Describing a procession of miners, a writer in its columns said :—

‘ Two helmets towering over their heads betokened that the eye of the law was upon them.’

He meant that two policemen were present. Again :—

“The owls in the minster tower were startled before sunrise by the noise of their [the miners] approach, and the rooks circling round the battlements of the old castle heard afar the shrill music of pipes and the tingling of triangles, while the sky was yet grey with the coming dawn. The campanile-like spire of the old cathedral peeping over the roofs of houses, almost as ancient as itself, had a right to inquire what the world was coming to.”

It seems that there is a part of Durham where “cosy old mansions cherish a proud conservative element,” but on the occasion of this demonstration, these cosy old mansions “could not help casting surprised and anxious glances on the sea of people that literally flooded the meadow used as a cricket ground.” The speakers were not cheered, or even loudly cheered, but were “greeted by a storm-wave of billycock hats, excited by volleys of cheers.” The men did not walk in close order, but “kept religiously together.” Lord Shaftesbury sympathised with the complaints of the miners, and we are told that “their grievances found a friendly echo in the philanthropic breast of Lord Shaftesbury.”

From an article on “Ladies Dresses” in a recent issue of the same journal, we take the following extract :—

“Hercules found the ninth labour imposed on him one of exceptional difficulty. To wrestle with the Nemean lion, or to slay the Lernean hydra, to destroy the Erymanthian boar or to conquer the Stympalian birds were works completely sympathetic to the nature of so pronounced an athlete ; but when it came to seizing the girdle of the Queen of the Amazons, a certain amount of diplomacy was evidently required to temper the power of merely brute force. Hippolyte, it will be remembered, possessed the very girdle, or zone, that Admete, daughter of Eurystheus, hungered after, and matters became so serious that the aid of Hercules was promptly invoked.”

Dean Alfred warned students against adopting "the vitiated and pretentious style, which passes current in our newspapers," and if all journalists had the inflated style of the one just quoted, the Dean's warning would not have been called for. In small country newspapers one may frequently meet with specimens of such debased style. Thus, in the hands of the young reporter, "a fine lot of poultry" becomes "an interesting assortment of the feathered creation;" they lunched, or dined, becomes, "they partook of some refreshment;" woman becomes "the weaker sex;" fire, "the devouring element;" horse, "charger," anger, "ire;" before, "ere;" valley, "vale;" tobacco, "the noxious weed;" Shakespere, "the bard of Avon;" drunk, "inebriated," or "intoxicated;" a fair lady, or a pretty woman, is described as "a female possessing considerable personal attractions;" the young, "the juvenile portion of humanity."

VAGUE LANGUAGE IS A VIOLATION OF SIMPLICITY. The meaning of some authors who use long sentences and uncommon words, cannot be understood. The following extract, taken from a work on "Charlotte Brontë," is written by Mr. Swinburne:—

"The crudest as the most refined pedantry of semi-science, tricked out at second-hand in the freshest or the stalest phrases of archaic schoolmen, or neologic lectures that may be swept up from the dustiest boards, or picked up under the daintiest platform, irradiated or obfuscated by new lamps or old, will avail nothing to guide any possible seeker on the path towards an exploration by physical analysis, or metaphysical synthesis of the source or the process, the fountain or the channel or the issue, of this subtle and infallible force of nature, the progress from the root into the fruit of this direct creative instinct."

We have read this sentence over several times, but cannot understand what the author means. A reviewer of the book suggests that this cascade of vocables contains just

one proposition, important but simple, namely, that the creative genius of the true artist is inexplicable in words.

Mr. Herbert Spencer's language is sometimes unintelligible. He defines evolution as a change from an indefinite, incoherent, homogeneity, to a definite, coherent, heterogeneity, through continuous "differentiations and integrations," which, interpreted into plain English by Mr. Kirkman, the mathematician, means :—

"Evolution is a change from a nohowish, untalkaboutable all-alikeness, to a somehowish, and in-general-talkaboutable not-all-alikeness, by continuous something-elsefications and sticktogetherations."

As a clever travesty on the above ill-sounding mystification of Mr. Herbert Spencer, which conceals the meaning it ought to express; take Mr. Kirkman's "Formula of Universal Change":—

"Change is a perichoretical synechy of pamparalagmatic and porroteroporenmatical differentiations and integrations."

The importance of using plain English words may be illustrated by the following incident :—

"When Franklin was a boy he thought it fine to use long words, and one day told his father that he had swallowed some acephalous molluscs, which so alarmed him, that he shrieked for help. The mother came in with warm water, and they forced half-a-gallon down Benjamin's throat with the garden pump, then held him upside down, the father saying, "If we don't get those things out of Benny, he'll be poisoned sure." When Benjamin was allowed to get his breath, he explained that the articles referred to were oysters. His father was so enraged, that he beat him for an hour, for frightening the family. Franklin never afterwards used a word of two syllables when one would do."

IX.—ON BREVITY IN STYLE.

This quality consists in using the fewest words necessary for the adequate expression of ideas. Dr. Angus considers it the first quality of style. It is certainly a leading one, for needless words diminish the strength of a sentence.

"Concise sentences," says Bacon, "like darts, fly abroad and make impressions, while long discourses are flat things, and not regarded."

Conciseness consists in the avoidance of needless words, as in the following examples :—

"Less capacity is required for this business, but more time *is necessary.*"

The words in italics are superfluous, and the sentence would read better inverted thus :—

"More time is required for this business, but less capacity."

Advertisements frequently appear in the newspapers announcing the death of a widow, who is described as "*relict of the late.*" The last two words are superfluous, because *relict* means a woman whose husband is dead.

"There is exceedingly little information obtainable about Dryden's youth."—*G. Saintsbury.*

Better :—

"Very little is known of Dryden's youth."

Again :—

"*There is nothing which* promotes a man's welfare better than good manners."

The sentence is strengthened by the omission of the words in italics.

BREVITY IS VIOLATED BY CIRCUMLOCUTION. Thus :—

"Pope professed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity presented itself, he praised through the whole

period of his existence with a liberality which never varied ; and perhaps his character may receive some illustration, if a comparison be instituted between him and the man whose pupil he was."

The substance of this sentence has been condensed by Professor Dalglish as follows:—

"Pope professed himself the pupil of Dryden, whom, on every opportunity he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality ; and perhaps his character may be illustrated by comparing him with his master."

Another authority has put the ideas in shorter form :—

"Pope professed himself the pupil of Dryden whom he lost no opportunity of praising ; and his character is illustrated by comparison with his master."

Nothing material is lost by judicious shortening. Strength may also be gained by using an adverb for an adverbial phrase, as in the command "Do it instantly," for "Do it without losing a single moment." A well known author, "A.K.H.B.," has a trick of repeating the last words of a sentence, thus: "It is all very strange, *very strange*." "It is even so, *even so*." Nothing is gained by repetition, unless it be a reputation for garrulous absurdity. Condensation is a valuable art, skill in which can only be attained by constant exercise, and by habits of close observation. The English Civil Service Commissioners make a point of examining candidates in what they call *précis*-writing, by which is meant the production of an epitome, summary, outline, or abridgment of an official letter or paper. Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, of the Board of Trade, tells us that many competitors, owing to a want of natural aptitude, or defective education, are incapable of making a short and accurate abstract of even a simple correspondence, though they may be termed "fairly educated" in the ordinary sense of the word. As the art of *précis*-writing is a useful one in all commercial pursuits, students cannot be too painstaking in

their efforts to acquire it. As a mental exercise, also, it is invaluable. It compels the student to understand the subject thoroughly before he can reproduce the substance of it briefly and clearly in his own words.

For an example of verbosity, we go to Dr. Johnson. His letters from the Hebrides to Mrs. Thrale are, Macaulay said, the original of that work of which the "Journey to the Hebrides" is the translation; and it is amusing to compare the two versions. In his letters he wrote:—

"When we were taken upstairs, a dirty fellow bounced out of a bed on which one of us was to lie."

He did not think this simple statement good enough for his book, but wrote in this pompous style:—

"Out of the bed on which we were to repose, there started up at our entrance a man as black as a Cyclops from a forge."

Dr. Johnson has had many followers, some of whom have tried to "throw light on dark passages of the Sacred Book itself by re-writing them in their own language. Thus, one author translates the verse:—

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God,"

Into—

"From all eternity was the Divine Ego, and the Divine Ego was present to the cognitions of the absolute Divine mind, and the very Eternal Ego was Deity's own cognised self."

For—

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made,"

This solemn trifle substitutes:—

"All other sub-esses were legally and actually synthesitised by and through the Divine Ego; and without his act and deed was not any sub-esse conceived that was conceived."

A similar instance of the preference for long words over

short ones is recorded by Mr. Oliphant,* who says that when Canning wrote the inscription graven on Pitt's monument in the London Guildhall, an alderman felt much disgusted at the simple phrase, "He died poor," and wished to substitute, "He expired in indigent circumstances." Mr. Oliphant asks, "Could the difference between the scholar-like and the vulgar be more happily marked?"

There are cases, however, where a use of circumlocution would be permissible. For instance, to tell a man that his statement was not consistent with truth, would be less offensive than to tell him that he lied. This softened tone of expression is called a *euphemism*.

X.—ON PURITY IN STYLE.

Purity of language is said to be regulated by the laws of taste; but the standard of taste differs among the best writers. As a rule, however, we may safely take the practice of the majority of the best authors as our standard of taste. In order to write with purity, we must

1. *Avoid vulgarity and slang.*—Taste continually alters in reference to vulgarisms. The *Edinburgh Review* of 1830 condemns *wherein* and *hereby*, which are now accepted as good English. Among words and phrases which are really vulgar may be mentioned: higgledy-piggledy, slap-dash, bang-up, transmogrify, bamboozle, topsy-turvy, pell-mell, hurly-burly, cut-up, all-serene, stunning, "it rains cats and dogs." A great deal of slang is used by writers of the lower class of novels, and occasionally it may be found in

* "Sources of Standard English."

works of solid character. Thus, the author of a biography of the "Founders of the Iron Trade" says of the late Mr. Joseph Pease :—

"He never approved of half measures. Vulgarly speaking, he went in for the *whole hog or none*."

In his biography of Dryden, Mr. G. Saintsbury says :—

"This, too, was something of a *pot-boiler*. . . . This poem possesses a very fair capacity for *holding water*."

Here is another instance of vulgar language :—

"At Washington Chamber of Representatives, women hurriedly take notes of what is passing, sitting *cheek by jowl* with the male members of the craft, between whom and themselves the best feeling exists."—*Cassell's Magazine*.

Among university students, also, slang is much used ; but it is avoided by all good writers and speakers, who agree with Swift that "to introduce and multiply cant words is the most ruinous corruption in any language."

2. *Avoid the general use of technical terms.*—Words relating to the sciences, or the arts, are seldom understood by the general reader, and should not be used unless absolutely necessary. From a desire to show off their learning, or from their training, young medical men often use technical language. Thus, a doctor is reported to have described a black eye in the following terms :—

"I found on examination a contusion of the integuments under the orbit, with extravasation of blood and ecchymosis of the surrounding cellular tissue, which was in a tumefied state, with abrasion of the cuticle."

"This example brings to my mind," remarks a medical writer, "a well-timed rebuke that I myself received from a judge in a supreme court nearly twenty years ago."

"I was giving surgical evidence in a criminal case and in doing so indulged somewhat freely in medical technicalities while describing the nature of the injuries the plaintiff had received. The judge addressed me as follows: 'Sir, you will be good enough to speak in a language which the jury may be able to understand, and leave technicalities for your surgery or dissecting room.' It is needless for me to describe my feelings on the occasion; suffice it to say I have given evidence in criminal cases scores of times since, but never forgot this circumstance."

Doubtless, it is not always possible to avoid technicalities; indeed, they are valuable where they conduce to brevity and where they are understood, but their use should be confined to the initiated. In language addressed to general readers technical words should be avoided.

3. *Avoid the use of foreign words.*—Young writers think the use of foreign words indicative of the possession of extensive learning. Even Dr. Freeman, the historian, held the same opinion when he first began to write, but in the preface to some recently-published essays he says:—

"In almost every page I have found it easy to put some plain English words, about whose meaning there can be no doubt, instead of those needless French and Latin words which are thought to add dignity to style, but which, in truth, only add vagueness. I am in no way ashamed to find that I can write purer and clearer English now than I did fourteen or fifteen years back, and I think it well to mention the fact for the encouragement of younger writers. The common temptation of beginners is to work in what they think a more elevated fashion. It needs some years of practice before a man fully takes in the truth that for real clearness there is nothing like the old English speech of our forefathers."

The use of foreign words is admissible only when English equivalents cannot be found. To a young writer who had offered him an article, the late Mr. William Cullen Bryant, the American editor and poet, wrote:—

"I observe that you have used several French expressions in your letter. I think if you will study the English language, that you will

find it capable of expressing all the ideas that you may have. I have always found it so, and in all that I have written, I do not recall an instance where I was tempted to use a foreign word, but that, in searching, I have found a better one in my own language."

4. *Do not coin words.*—The Americans are often accused of coining words; but Oliver Wendell Holmes contends that they never make a new word until they have made a new thing or a new thought. Many of the words considered new by us are really *old* English words, which the Americans have preserved for us, while *we* have been coining *new* ones, which have displaced the old. Writers have been warned against using *collide*, *interviewed*, *valedicted*, which have been called barbarisms. Dr. Murray tells us that the word *collide* has been in regular English use since 1621, when it was first used by Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy." It has also been used by Dryden, Charlotte Brontë, Carlyle, and Grote. Apart from its long and honourable history, it is surely briefer to say that a train "collided," instead of "came into collision." *Valedicted* is occasionally used in English religious journals, and *interviewed* expresses a new idea in journalism. In the past, as in the present, a protest was frequently made against the use of new words. The word *survey* was objected to by a writer of the eighteenth century. He would, Dr. Murray thinks, have been extremely disgusted had he foreseen the time when people would sing—

"When I *survey* the wondrous cross,"

which would seem as stilted then as "when Gabriel *interviewed* Mary" would be now. As a general rule, however, words contrary to analogy, or without absolute necessity, should not be coined; but the invention of new words is sometimes a necessity, and a correspondent of the *New York Herald* has recently attempted to supply an undoubted want. He says: "The frequent necessity for the use of the expres-

sions, 'telephonic communication,' or 'message by telephone,' which are both long and cumbersome, and the want of any one word in the English language to express this meaning, suggests the propriety of coining a new word to signify telephonic message or communication. A word formed in accordance with the rules of etymology and fully conveying the required meaning would be 'telelogue'—a speaking from a distance." The *Times* has already adopted the word. The young writer should use words already in existence before making new ones which may not be so good. He should be neither the first to catch up the new, nor the last to let go the old.

5. *Avoid inconsistent words.*

"I had liked to have gotten one or two broken heads for my impertinence."—*Swift*.

The question arises, how many heads had he? The sentence should have been :—

"I was once or twice in danger of having my head broken."

Alexander Smith wrote :—

"The village stands far inland ; and the streams that *trot* through the soft green valleys all about have as little knowledge of the sea, as the three-years' child of the storms and passions of manhood."

Whoever saw a stream *trot*? *Trot* should be *meander*.

6. *Avoid quaintness of expression.* As an example of affectation, we quote an extract from A.K.H.B. :—

"Show us this life to come—where-away lies it? What-like life is it! What-like life do they live there?"

Goldsmith, though so chaste in his writings, is said to have been singularly careless and inaccurate in conversation. He used to say, "This is as good a *guinea* as was ever *born*," instead of *ccined*.

XI.—ON ENERGY IN STYLE.

Energy in style is opposed to feebleness, and implies the power of so placing words as to produce, not only clearness, but impressiveness. It may be aided—

(a) *By Inversion.* The statement—

“Great is Diana of the Ephesians,”

is stronger than when expressed by the customary order of construction—

“Diana of the Ephesians is great.”

Again :—

“Silver and gold have I none,”

is stronger than

“I have no silver and no gold.”

So, also, in the following example :—

“The pavements we walk upon, the coals in our grates—how many milleniums old are they ? The pebble you kick aside with your foot—how many generations will it outlast ?”—*Dr. Maclaren.*

The language is more impressive than it would be if written in the ordinary way. Sometimes an emphatic word is put first, as—

“Sunk are thy towers in shapeless ruin all.”—*Goldsmith.*

“*Great* is the power of eloquence.”—*Sterne.*

which produces greater animation than if written in the common way—

“All thy towers are sunk in shapeless ruin.”

“The power of eloquence is great.”

Mr. Davenport Adams quotes the following extract from Kinglake :—

“Stopped at once by this ready manœuvre, and the fire that it brought on their flank, the horsemen wheeled again and retreated.”

This form, he considers, is much more energetic than the strict grammatical sequence—

“The horsemen, stopped at once by this ready manœuvre and the fire that it brought on their flank, wheeled again to their left and retreated.”

Sometimes an emphatic phrase is put first. Thus :—

“Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?”

is more effective than

“Where are your fathers? and do the prophets live for ever?”

Inversion should, however, be sparingly used, for, as a rule, the common order of expression is best. Nothing is gained by inversion in the following sentence :—

“Abundant evidence have we that Carlyle regards Romanism, the Papacy, as the great nuisance and pest of Europe in these later ages.”—*Paxton Hood*.

(b) *By Antithesis*.—By contrasting one thing with something opposite, a pleasing effect is produced, and an idea comes out more clearly. The Bible affords many illustrations :—

“The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

“The memory of the just is blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot.”

“The wicked flee when no man pursueth, but the righteous are bold as a lion.”

Goldsmith supplies us with an excellent example :—

“Contrasted faults through all their manners reign;
Though *poor, luxurious*; though *submissive, vain*;
Though *grave, yet trifling*; zealous, yet *untrue*;
And e'en in *penance, planning sins* anew.”

Dr. Johnson was great at antithesis; of Jonas Hanway, who was fond of showing himself, he said :—

"He acquired some reputation in travelling abroad, but lost it in travelling at home."

Of a dull fop, he said :—

"That man possesses but one idea, *and that is a wrong one.*"

Dr. Morell quotes the following examples from Macaulay :—

"The Puritans hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bears, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators."

"If Boswell had not been a great fool, he would never have been a great writer."

(c) *By Exclamation*, which is a figure employed to express strong emotion, as :—

"What a piece of work is man ! How noble in reason, in form how moving ! How express and admirable ! In action, how like an angel ! In apprehension, how like a god ! The beauty of the world ! The paragon of animals !"—*Shakespeare.*

"O eloquent, just, and mighty death !"—*Sir Walter Raleigh.*

"O evening sun of July, how, at this hour, thy beams fall slant on reapers amid peaceful woody fields ! On old women spinning in cottages ! On ships far out in the silent main ! On balls at the Orangerie, at Versailles, where high-rouged dames of the Palace are even now dancing with double-jacketed Hussar officers ; and also on this roaring Hell-porch of a Hôtel de Ville !"—*Carlyle.*

(d) *By Interrogation*.—To rouse the attention of readers, or of hearers, this figure is probably the best which could be used. It is a favourite method with the earnest writer and the preacher to put a searching question, and leave those he addresses to supply the answer. Dr. Maclaren uses it frequently. In a sermon on "The Hiding Place," occur the following questions :—

"Have we found what we seek among men ? Have we ever known amongst the dearest that we have clung to, one arm that was strong enough to keep us in all danger ? Has there ever been a human love to which we can run with the security that *there is a strong tower where no evil can touch us ?*"

Again :—

“What do we, as a nation, care about books? How much do you think we spend altogether on our libraries, public or private, as compared with what we spend on our horses?”—*Ruskin*.

(e) *By Ellipsis*, or the omission of one or more words obviously understood; thus :—

“Reading makes a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.”—*Bacon*.

Strength is gained by omitting the verb.

(f) *By Simile*, in which two things having some point, or points, of resemblance, are compared :—

“He shall be *like* a tree planted by the rivers of water.” “He is *like* a lion in the fight.”

In the latter case the writer might have said that he is a very brave soldier, or that he fought fiercely; but both these impressions are common place as compared with the *simile*, by means of which the idea of bravery is brought more vividly before the mind. Again :—

“The ungodly are *like* the chaff which the wind driveth away.”

“I am not content to pass away *like* a weaver’s shuttle.”—*Charles Lamb*.

(g) *By Metaphor*, which is a figure expressed in a single word, for example :—

“The man is a *fox*,” *i.e.*, he has a sly, cunning nature.

The detectives of Paris are hidden from public view, and have been described as

“The dogs who hunt out and point where the game is to be found.”

Butler, in his “*Hudibras*,” wishes to call up before us the pulpit of the Puritans, and described it thus :—

“And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
Was beat with fist instead of a stick.”

(h) *By Allegory*, a figure representing language which has another meaning than the literal one. In the following

beautiful example from the 80th Psalm, the people of Israel are represented under the symbol of a vine :—

“Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadows of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way, do pluck her? The bear out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.”

(i) *By Personification*, the figure by which animals and inanimate objects are spoken of as if they were human beings. It is used frequently in the book of Psalms, thus :—

“The *mountains* and the *hills* shall break forth before you into *singing*, and all the *trees* of the field shall *clap their hands*.”

“See, winter comes to *rule* the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train. —*Thomson*.”

(k) *By Synecdoche*, a figure which puts a part for the whole. For a good example, we are indebted to Charles Dickens. That lively creation of his, Sam Weller—boots at the White Hart, in London—naturally considers that a man’s boots are the most important part of his belongings. Hence when asked who there was in the house, he replies :—

“There’s a wooden leg in number six; there’s a pair of Hessians in thirteen; there’s two pair of halves in the commercial; there’s these here painted tops in the snuggery, inside the bar, and five more tops in the coffee room.”

(l) *By Metonymy*, by which one thing is put for another, thus :—

“The whole *city* came forth to meet him.”

Here *city* is put for *inhabitants*.

“I have been reading Shakespeare.”

This means that he has been reading the works of Shakespeare.

XII.—PARTS OF SPEECH.

The following illustrations of the use of the parts of speech will be helpful :—

The Article.—Frequent errors are made in the use of the indefinite article. The rule is seldom understood. *A* becomes *an* before the vowels *a, e, i, o, u*, and also when the *h* is silent, but not before *w, y*, or words in which the initial vowel has the sound of *y*. In this case, *a* is generally used. Observe its use in the following sentences where the aspirate occurs :—

“To listen to Mr. Morley when he speaks as *an* historian and critic is always a pleasure.”—*Quarterly Review*.

“He is *an* historian, not a critic.”—*Trench*.

On the other hand, Macaulay uses *a* thus :—

“That *a* historian should not record trifles is perfectly true.”

A is invariably used before the vowels *w* and *y*. As “*A* well of water.” “He heard *a* yell.” It is correctly used before *u* when *y* is understood. As “*a* (y)unit,” “*a* (y)union,” “*a* (y)use,” “*a* (y)European.” Not *an* unit, *an* union, *an* use, *an* European, *an* one.

An is incorrectly used for *a* by Dickens :—

“You remember my saying to you how curious I thought it that ‘Robinson Crusoe’ should be the only instance of an universally popular book that could make no one laugh and could make no one cry.”

In conversation the definite article has a long, open sound, as the (thee) before the vowels *a, e, i, o, u*. For example : “The ass,” “the egg,” “the ice,” “the owl,” “the understanding”; and short before *w* and *y* and words beginning with a consonant. Thus : “The well of water,” “the yell of the hyæna.” The correct use of the article in writing and speaking constitutes one of those niceties of distinction so characteristic of the English language.

The Adverb.—Adverbs should be placed as near as possible to the words they are intended to qualify. *Rather* is frequently misplaced. Archbishop Trench, in his “English Past and Present,” writes :—

“It *rather* modified the structure of our sentences than the elements of our vocabulary.”

The sentence should have been written :—

“It modified the structure of our sentences *rather than* the elements of our vocabulary.”

Of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Leslie Stephens writes :—

“So far as his mode of teaching goes, he is *rather* a disciple of Socrates than of St. Paul or Wesley.”

The sentence should have been written :—

“So far as his mode of teaching goes he is a disciple of Socrates *rather than* of St. Paul or Wesley.”

From the London *Examiner* we take the following sentence :—

“That the great mass of our painters are poorly educated in the technical laws of their craft is the fault *rather* of English art institutions than of English artists.”

The sentence should have been written :—

“That the great mass of our painters are poorly educated in the technical laws of their craft is the fault of English art institutions *rather than* of English artists.”

Only :—

“It will be *only* necessary for the British fleet to enter the Bosphorus when the Russians appear before the gates of the capital.”

The sentence would be better written :—

“It will be necessary for the British fleet to enter the Bosphorus *only* when the Russians appear before the gates of the capital.”

Again :—

“His efforts were confined *only* to remonstrance and exhortation.”

Should be :—

“His efforts were confined to remonstrance and exhortation only.”

Neither is frequently used for *none*, thus :—

“Neither of the prisoners has been visited since Saturday.”—*Daily News*.

This means that neither one of two prisoners has been visited. As there were four prisoners, the writer should have used “**none**” for “**neither**.”

Alike :—

“Which alike we and the author consider the best strain in the whole “Life Drama.”—*Rev. George Gilfillan*.

“Alike” refers to “we and the author,” and should follow “author.”

Not only. When “not only” precedes “but also,” see that each is followed by the same part of speech, as in the following case :

“He not only gave me a grammar, but also lent me a dictionary.”

The Adjective.—Great carelessness is displayed by many writers and speakers in the indiscriminate use of the degrees of adjectives. When *two* things are compared, the comparative form should be used. This rule is violated in the following instance :—

“Of two forms of the same word, use the fittest.”—*Dr. Morell*.

“Fittest” should be “fitter.”

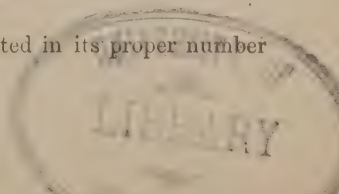
The superlative is correctly used in the following instance :

“He was the greatest coward of the three.”

The nominative and the verb should agree in number.

“The whole number is divided into two classes, the first class and the last class. To the former of these belong three; to the latter one.”—*Dean Alford*.

The verb should have been repeated in its proper number



after its respective nominatives. The sentence should have been written thus :—

“The whole number is divided into two classes, the first class and the second class. To the former of these belong three, to the latter belongs one.”

Dean Alford also wrote :—

“*Abnormal* is one of those words which *has* come in to supply a want in the precise statements of science.”

“Has” should be “have” to agree with its nominative.

Here is another confused sentence :—

“Discussion on the vexed questions connected with baptism, both as to its subject, and its mode of administration, *are* not very profitable, and the seldomer *they arise* the better.”

As “discussion” is the subject, and is singular in number, the verbs and the pronoun should also be singular.

Nouns and Pronouns.—The relation between nouns and pronouns is a great stumbling block to many writers. The following sentence occurs in Hallam’s “Literature of Europe” :—

“No one as yet had exhibited the structure of the human kidneys Vesalius having only examined them in dogs.”

The sentence should have been :—

“No one had as yet exhibited the structure of the kidneys in human beings, Vesalius having examined such organs in dogs only.”

Professor A. W. Ward writes :—

“The *delusiveness* of Bolingbroke’s repeated observations *are* transparent enough.”

“Delusiveness” is singular ; therefore “is” should have been used.

Sir Arthur Helps wrote :—

“I knew a brother-author of his who received such criticisms from him (Dickens) very lately, and profited by it.”

It should be *them* to agree with *criticisms*.

The Pronoun.—The relative pronoun should always be placed as near as possible to the antecedent to which it belongs. In the following cases this rule is violated :—

“I met my uncle yesterday who told me he was going to Paris”

—*Dr. Morell*.

This should have been :—

“Yesterday, I met my uncle who told me he was going to Paris.”

Again :—

“There are a good many Radical members in the House who cannot forgive the Prime Minister for being a Christian.”

This should have been :—

“In the House there are a good many Radical members who cannot forgive the Prime Minister for being a Christian.”

“These are the master’s rules, who must be obeyed.”

Should be :—

“These are the rules of the master, who must be obeyed.”

In the following case the wrong pronouns are used :—

“Off they flew till they met the gray bird, *who* had laid her egg in their nest.”

Who should be *which*, because *who* is employed in relation to persons only.

“A man *that* can write freely and eloquently in one strain, or in one species of composition, may be dry and barren in another strain or another species of composition.”—*William Minto*.

“Men *that* break loose from the professions, who stray from the beaten track of life, take refuge in literature.”—*Alexander Smith*.

That should be *who*.

Prepositions.—In the use of prepositions frequent errors are made, especially in the use of *with*. Thus, a writer in the *Saturday Review* said that he “differed *with* Lord Derby”;

with should be *from*. We invariably contend *against* difficulties, and differ *from* opponents; we never contend *with* them, or differ *with* them. A man may, *with* others like-minded, contend *for* the faith, *against* the infidel. In any case, whether or not he expresses the fact, he must differ *from*, and contend *against*, the object of his difference, or aversion. A sentence should never conclude with an insignificant word. The following sentences conclude with a preposition:—

"Our own contributions to it [a study of Burns], we are aware, can be but scanty and feeble; but we offer them with good will, and trust they may meet with acceptance from those they are intended for."—*Carlyle*.

Better thus:—

" . . . from those for whom **they** are intended."

"Most writers have some one vein that they peculiarly and obviously excel in."—*William Minto*.

Better thus:—

"Most writers have some one vein in which **they** peculiarly and obviously excel."

XIII.—ON PUNCTUATION.

Punctuation is the art of pointing written compositions for the purpose of showing more clearly the relation and meaning of the words. It is ruled to a large extent by imitation of the pauses made by a good speaker; but according to Professor Marsh, the principles of punctuation are subtle, and an exact logical training is requisite for their just application. However difficult the art may be, all writers should know how to punctuate their own compositions. Too few, unfortunately, pay attention to the correct use of stops. An editor of wide experience writes:—

A great many people, occupying social and professional positions where it is absolutely necessary that they should be able to write legibly, spell correctly, and express themselves without gross grammatical solecisms, or very pronounced inelegancies in composition, fulfil all these conditions, and yet seem to have no idea that it is desirable to mark where a sentence ends by using a full point, and commencing the next sentence with a capital letter. Sometimes a feeble substitute, which appears to be something between a hyphen and a dash, is used instead of the required point. Often, however, letters are written by eminent commercial men, and even by members of the learned professions, in which the train of ideas is never once interrupted—so far as the eye is concerned—by anything stronger than a comma. It is needless to enlarge upon the inconvenience caused by this habit, which is possibly the result rather of slovenliness than of ignorance. We have constant opportunities of noticing how the remarks of a writer, when they appear in print, are altogether misrepresented, in consequence of the neglect of the full point. Wherefore, to those who have hitherto sinned against the light in this respect, we in all earnestness apply the vigorous appeal of Hamlet, "Reform it altogether."

Many people rely entirely upon the compositors, who are supposed to be able to punctuate, as well as to read writing as bad as Horace Greeley's or Dean Stanley's. It is not prudent, however, to leave a matter of so much importance to a compositor, for, however expert, he cannot always understand the meaning of an author so well as the author himself. The work of compositors is to set up "copy," not to read it; and even if it were their duty to punctuate, they are not always able to do so. The following example of their ability must not be considered representative: Two compositors were working in a small printing office. "Harry," said one, "here is a big bit of copy, and not a comma from the head to the tail of it." "Never mind," replied the comrade, "throw in a few here and there!" Ignorance of the principles of punctuation is not confined to printers. Lord Byron could not punctuate, and his proof sheets are said to have had a most slovenly look. In returning a proof

of one of his poems to Murray, he wrote: "God knows if you can read through what I have written, but I can't. If you have patience, look it over for me. Do you know anybody who can stop—I mean *point*—commas, and so forth? For I am, I hear, a sad hand at your punctuation." Other men love punctuation as much as Lord Byron hated it. Isaac Disraeli said that a habit of correctness in the lesser parts of composition will assist the higher; that the great Milton was anxious for correct punctuation, and that Addison was solicitous after the minutiae of the press. Jeffrey, the first editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, plumed himself upon his ability in punctuating. Lord Cockburn said of him:—

"There was no one of the friends of his later acquisition for whom he had greater admiration or regard than Mr. Macaulay; and he testified the interest which he took in this great writer's fame by a proceeding which, considering his age and position, is not unworthy of being told. This judge, of seventy-four, revised the proof-sheets of Macaulay's first volumes of the History of England, with the diligence and minute care of a corrector of the press toiling for bread, not merely suggesting changes in the matter and the expression, but attending to the very commas and colons—a task which, though humble, could not be useless, because it was one at which long practice had made him very skilful. Indeed, he used to boast that it was one of his peculiar excellencies. On returning a proof to an editor of the *Review*, he says: 'I have myself rectified most of the errors, and made many valuable verbal improvements in a small way. But my great task has been with the punctuation, on which I have, as usual, acquitted myself to admiration. And indeed this is the department of literature in which I feel that I most excel, and on which I am therefore most willing now to stake my reputation!'"

One of the most particular of proof readers is Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who follows the printer up to the last moment of going to press. Perhaps the reports of public meetings furnish the largest number of errors of punctuation. When we remember the long hours which reporters work,

and the exhausting nature of their duties, we readily understand that time will not admit of much attention being paid to punctuation. But we can scarcely do less than sympathise with a clergyman who, in a sermon on the horrors of intemperance, is reported to have said :—

“Why only last Sabbath, in this holy house, a woman fell from one of those seats while I was preaching the gospel in a state of beastly intoxication.”

A comma after “seats,” and another after “gospel,” would have put the saddle on the right horse. But the sentence might have been so constructed as to convey the preacher’s meaning with certainty without the aid of a comma. He might have said :—

“Why only last Sabbath in this holy house while I was preaching the gospel a woman fell from one of those seats in a state of beastly intoxication.”

By this construction the ambiguity is avoided. Every effort should be made to construct sentences on a similar method; for, as Lord Kaimes wrote: “Punctuation may remove an ambiguity, but will never produce that peculiar beauty which is perceived when the sense comes out clearly and distinctly by means of a happy arrangement.” The misplacing of a comma often alters the meaning of a sentence. The contract made for lighting the town of Liverpool, during the year 1819, was rendered void by the misplacing of a comma in the advertisements, thus :—

“The lamps at present are about 4,050, and have in general two spouts each, composed of not less than twenty threads of cotton.”

The contractors would have proceeded to furnish each lamp with the said twenty threads, but this being but half the usual quantity, the commissioners discovered that the difference arose from the comma following, instead of preceding,

the word *each*. The parties agreed to annul the contract, and a new one was ordered.

“The prisoner said the witness was a convicted thief.

Thus ran a sentence in a newspaper, and, as the oft-cited Irishman would say, was nearly landing the proprietors in hot water; yet the words were written and printed in perfect good faith, were true, and wanted no other word or qualifying omission to make them as harmless as they were justifiable. Proper punctuation alone was needed; and when proper punctuation had been supplied in deference to a lawyer's letter, the sentence was word for word the same, but with an exactly opposite signification:

“The prisoner, said the witness, was a convicted thief.”

THE PRINCIPAL MARKS OF PUNCTUATION ARE: (1) comma, (2) semi-colon, (3) colon, (4) full stop, (5) the dash, (6) the note of admiration, and (7) the note of interrogation.

1.—THE COMMA (,) which “represents the shortest pause in reading, and indicates a portion cut off.” The chief rules for the insertion of commas are: (a) *when words are contrasted*, as—

“Though bright, yet cloudy.”

(b) *When a sentence is inverted*, as:—

“Of all our senses, sight is the most perfect and delightful.”

“To learn much, we must learn a little at a time.”—*Locke*.

(c) *When parenthetical clauses are used*, as:—

“Books, regarded merely as a gratification, are worth more than all the luxuries on earth.”

“The favourite diversions of the middle ages, in the intervals of war, were those of hunting and hawking.”

(d) *When adjectival, participial, adverbial, and absolute phrases are used*, as:—

“Cradled in the camp, Napoleon was the darling of the army.”

“On the other hand, it is asserted.”

"To form an adequate idea of the duties of this crisis, it will be necessary to raise your minds to a level with your station."

"Life is made up, not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things in which smiles, and kindness, and small obligations, given habitually, win and preserve the heart, and secure comfort."—*Sir Humphrey Davy*.

"Your praise was welcome, not only because I believe it was sincere, but because praise has been very scarce."—*Johnson*.

(e) *When two or more phrases occur in the same sentence, as :—*

"Regret for the past, grief at the present, and anxiety respecting the future, are plagues which affect most men."

"Order is the sanity of the mind, the health of the body, the peace of the city, the security of the State."—*Southey*.

(f) *When a verb is understood, as :—*

"To err is human ; to forgive, divine."

"Reading makes a full man ; writing, an exact man ; conversation, a ready man."

(g) *When words go in pairs, as :—*

"The authority of Plato and Aristotle, of Zeno and Epicurus, still reigned in the schools."

"In his successes and his failures, in his greatness and his littleness, he is ever clear, simple, true, and glitters with no lustre but his own."—*Carlyle on Burns*.

2. THE SEMICOLON (;) represents a longer pause than a comma, and indicates "half a member of a sentence." It should be used (a) when two classes—the one perfect in itself, and the other added as a matter of inference—are united by a conjunction, as :—

"The ships were in extreme peril ; for the river was low, and the only navigable channel ran very near to the left bank."—*Macaulay*.

(b) *When several words separated by a comma stand in the same relation to other words in the sentence, as :—*

"Grammar is divided into four parts ; orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody."

3. THE COLON (:) is placed after a sentence complete in itself, but followed by an illustration, as :—

“By this means was the young head furnished with a considerable miscellany of things and shadows of things : History in authentic fragments lay mingled with fabulous chimeras, wherein also was reality.”—*Carlyle*.

“Instead of always reading, I prefer to think : on every subject there are only a few leading ideas, and these we may originate for ourselves.” *Sheridan*.

4. THE FULL STOP (.).—When a sentence is complete in itself and has no grammatical connection with what follows, a full stop, period, or, as printers call it, a full point, is used, as :—

“Procrastination is the thief of time.”

“Health is wealth.”

5. THE DASH (—) is generally used to mark an unexpected or an emphatic clause, as :—

“Was there ever a bolder captain, or a more valiant band ? Was there ever—but I scorn to boast.”

“To foster industry, to promote union, to cherish religious peace—these were his honest purposes.”

“If we wish rural walks to do our children good, we must give them a love for rural sights, an object in every walk ; we must teach them—and we can teach them—to find wonder in every insect, sublimity in every hedge-row, the records of past worlds in every pebble, and boundless fertility upon the barren shore.”—*Kingsley*.

6. THE NOTE OF ADMIRATION (!).—This is used after expressions of sudden emotion or passion, and after solemn invocations and addresses, as :—

“Ah ! the coward ! exclaimed Pompey.”

7. NOTE OF INTERROGATION (?).—This is placed at the end of a sentence when a question is asked. Thus :—

“Where are the dead ?”

It is impossible to give here all the rules relating to punctuation, and the student is strongly advised to study their application in the works of great writers, especially in those of Macaulay, who was extremely accurate in his punctuation.

The following sentence shows how difficult it is to read without the aid of points :—

“Death waits not for storm nor sunshine within a dwelling in one of the upper streets respectable in appearance and furnished with such conveniences as distinguish the habitations of those who rank among the higher classes of society a man of middle age lay on his last bed momentarily awaiting the final summons all that the most skilful medical attendance all that love warm as the glow that fires an angel’s bosom could do had been done by day and night for many long weeks had ministering spirits such as a devoted wife and loving children done all within their power to ward off the blow but there he lay his raven hair smoothed off from his noble brow his dark eyes lighted with unnatural brightness and contrasting strongly with the pallid hue which marked him as an expectant of the dread messenger,”

The same sentence, properly pointed, and with capital letters placed after full-points, according to the foregoing rules, may be easily read and understood :—

“Death waits not for storm nor sunshine. Within a dwelling in one of the upper streets, respectable in appearance, and furnished with such conveniences as distinguish the habitations of those who rank among the higher classes of society, a man of middle age lay on his last bed, momentarily awaiting the final summons. All that the most skilful medical attendance—all that love, warm as the glow that fires an angel’s bosom, could do, had been done ; by day and night, for many long weeks, had ministering spirits, such as a devoted wife and loving children, done all within their power to ward off the blow. But there he lay, his raven hair smoothed off from his noble brow, his dark eyes lighted with unnatural brightness, and contrasting strongly with the pallid hue which marked him as an expectant of the dread messenger.”

XIV.—ON PARAPHRASE.

To paraphrase is to reproduce in other language the words of an author, or to change the language of one expression or collection of words, phrases, or sentences into another, so as to retain and explain, in different words and form, the ideas the original words express. A good paraphrase should, moreover bring out more clearly, if possible, the meaning of an author, and some hold that it ought to be, not only a sort of explanatory translation of any passage of poetry or prose, but a commentary on the subject treated. To write a good paraphrase, therefore, implies a thorough knowledge of the meaning of the author read; hence the educational value of paraphrasing.

Great importance is attached to paraphrasing by Her Majesty's Inspectors, who set exercises in it at all examinations. But it does not appear to be very well done, either by the children in the higher standards, or by pupil-teachers. One inspector states that in his district paraphrasing is partly a verbatim copy of the originals, and partly a mass of absurdities; another, that the attempts at paraphrase are mostly impossible to pass; a third, that very few of the candidates have a clear idea of what is meant by a paraphrase.

Writing of a pupil who had just closed his apprenticeship, and who was about to commence his training college career, his inspector says that he was asked to paraphrase this passage, familiar, the inspector thinks, as household words:—

“For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there is the respect
That makes calamity of so long a life.”

Here follows his paraphrase, which the inspector prints without comment:—

"This passage means that when we are dead, no dreams can disturb us then. By 'shuffling off this mortal coil' means by trying to get out of dying, which is impossible. We must also respect it."

The following rules will be found helpful in paraphrasing:

1. Read over carefully the passage to be paraphrased until you have grasped its drift.

2. Note the leading propositions, and separate them from explanatory statements accompanying them.

3. Put down, if necessary, the meaning of any words used in a peculiar sense, and then draw up a rough outline of your paraphrase, afterwards writing it out neatly.

4. Use simple language, and express every idea contained in the original passage clearly.

5. Reduce inversions to their natural prose order. Shakespeare says: "The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye," for "My weeping eye takes the last leave of thee."

6. Explain obscure expressions. In order to be brief, the poet frequently becomes obscure. Wherever obscurity arises from this cause, an attempt should be made to amplify the passage, but at the same time using no needless words. Other things being equal, the best paraphrase is that which expresses the full meaning of the author in the fewest words.

7. Elliptical expressions should be filled up, thus: "I must to Coventry," would be "I must go to Coventry."

The following illustration will make it clearer how to paraphrase:—

"His nature is too noble for the world.

He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,

Or Jove for his power to thunder."—*Coriolanus*, iii., 1.

We have (1) an *assertion*, that his nature is noble; (2) an *implication*, that noble natures are not too much in favour with the world; and (3) two illustrations of the nobility of his nature, that he would not flatter even Neptune to gain his trident, and that he would not flatter even Jupiter to acquire his power to thunder. The meaning of the words

must then be noted: *nature* meaning disposition or character; *world*, society; *flatter*, fawn upon; *Neptune*, the ruler of the sea; *trident*, sceptre, sign of supremacy and might; *Jove*, the father of gods and men; *thunder*, to frighten, punish, or destroy. The paraphrase, then, would be:—

He is too good and noble for the tastes of any society, which cares little for noble natures. He would not fawn upon the god of the sea even though he might be able to gain the ability to rule the waves himself; nor would he bow the knee to the greatest of the gods in order to possess the power to frighten or kill others.

XV.—HINTS FOR ESSAYISTS.

Draw out a plan of your subject. An author lays out his programme with as much ingenuity as an architect draws out his plans of buildings. Skilful arrangement is one of the arts of authorship. No builder would begin to build a house before he had a plan prepared for his guidance. Having a plan, he would first dig the foundations, for without them a house could not stand. An essayist must begin his work in a similar manner. Macaulay's method was to make a general plan on large sheets of paper, with lines far apart; he then filled in, crowding sentence upon sentence until the whole was a marvel to see, and when change for the better, or illustration, or amplification seemed impossible, he copied the whole out in a fair hand for the printer. Johnson wrote all the articles for his *Rambler* as they were wanted, but he sketched them in outline before beginning to write. For subject, take the advice of Horace, and choose one within your strength. Having full command

of your subject, you will rarely be at a loss either for choice of words or clear arrangement. When you have written your paper, read it over aloud. The ear will discover defects which the eye cannot see. If a sentence does not read well, re-cast it. If it be harsh, make it musical.

BIOGRAPHY is the most pleasant and most profitable of all kinds of reading, and biographical subjects are certainly the easiest to write about. Men like to read of men who have lived noble lives, and done noble deeds—who have written famous books, erected fine churches, or constructed famous engineering works. Of great authors especially, men like to know the incidents of their lives, of their studies, how they lived, and how they worked, and the means by which they attained their excellence. As an aid in the formation of character, and as a stimulus to exertion, biography has high claims upon our attention. In writing a biographical essay, a brief summary of the principal events in a man's life should be attempted. It should open with a paragraph as to the position he held among his fellows, and should be followed by an account of his birth, education, and work. Finally, an estimate of his character and his influence should be given. The following outline of an article on Mr. Gladstone will serve as an example:—

1. Introductory.
2. Influences of Youth: Canning, Eton, Oxford; Enters Parliament.
3. Literary Studies: Church and State: Severance from the Conservative Ranks.
4. Visit to Naples: Growing Influence in Parliament.
5. Financial Minister of the Crown: The Budget of 1853: The Income Tax.
6. In Opposition: Homeric Studies.
7. Visits Ionian Islands: Paper Duty Repealed: Treaty with France.
8. Political Activity: Severance from Oxford.
9. Returned for South Lancashire: Parliamentary Reform.
10. Defeat on the Reform Bill: Agitation in the Country.
11. The State of Ireland: Irish Education: The Land Question: Disestablishment.
12. The Irish Church: Rejected by South-West Lancashire: Member for Greenwich.
13. Liberal Reaction: Fall of the Ministry: Retires from

the Liberal Leadership. 14. The Church of Rome: The Vatican Decrees. 15. The Great Romish Controversy: Dr. Newman: Papal Infallibility. 16. The Eastern Question: The Bulgarian Atrocities: The Blackheath Speech: Effect on the Country. 17. Personal Government: The Afghan War. 18. Continued Opposition to the Government: The Foreign Office Despatches. 20. Imperialism: The Lust of Empire—England's Mission. 21. Recess Studies: Dr. Chalmers: Dr. Newman: Wedgwood: Homer again. 22. Recess Studies (*continued*): Ecce Homo: The Prince Consort. 23. His Eloquence: Powers of Debate: Relation to the Liberal Party. 24. His Plea for Change of View. 25. Personal Character: Academic Honours: His Services to Christianity.

HISTORY. — Every person should be familiar with the history of his own country, and especially with the history of its moral and material progress. Examiners in English Composition frequently ask for essays on leading characters in history; the following are examples:—

I. *George IV. and William IV.*—Limits: (*a*) The prevailing national sentiments; (*b*) parties in the State; (*c*) leading statesmen, their principles and measures; (*d*) the growth of the nation; (*e*) eminent men in literature, science, and art, inventors, &c.; (*f*) principal civil and military events; (*g*) educational and social progress.

II. *Whigs and Tories.*—Explain the origin of the Whig and Tory parties; and show in what sense Shaftesbury has been called the founder of the former.

III. *Ireland.*—What was the condition of Ireland at the time of Oliver Cromwell's arrival there? What was the nature of his campaign and of the settlement effected by him?

IV. *Magna Charta.*—Sketch, in its general bearings upon the struggle which resulted in *Magna Charta*, the history of the reign of John up to the commendation of his kingdom to Rome, and illustrate the meaning of this act.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ECONOMY.—I. *The Effects of Machinery.*—During the last hundred years the substitution of machinery for hand labour in the staple industries of this country has been very extensive. (1) State the principal advantages and disadvantages arising from this substitution, and give illustrations in one or more employments—(a) Upon the workpeople; (b) upon the employers; (c) upon the general public—home and foreign; and (2) point out what, in your opinion, are the best means of remedying any evils which may have fallen upon the workpeople in particular from the progress of machinery in their various occupations.

II. *Technical Education and How to Extend it.*—To be considered under the several heads of—(a) Statement of intention and importance of technical education, with a discussion of the relation of the arts to the sciences; (b) technical schools, descriptive of approved models; (c) future relation of Mechanics' Institutions to Technical Schools; (d) how best to make workmen and others interested; (e) the special technical needs of particular districts.

III. *Division of Labour.*—Mention some of the chief advantages of division of labour, and point out the limits to profitable separation of employment.

IV. *Co-operation.*—To what extent is it likely that co-operation will supersede the present mode of carrying on business, both productive and distributive? How far is it desirable that it should do so?

V. *Trades.*—Explain what is meant by the industrial organisation of society? Show how trades may be connected with one another, and what effects are due to this connection?

VI. *Wages*. — “Wages are determined by supply and demand.” Investigate fully the significance of this proposition.

VII. *Trade Unions*.—What is a Trade Union? What are its objects and how does it propose to attain them? Would you think it better to strike for an advance of wages or against a reduction?

BOOKS OF REFERENCE: Mill’s “Political Economy;” Fawcett’s “Political Economy,” and “Economic Position of the British Labourer;” Enderby on “Money and Riches;” Brassey on “Work and Wages;” Thornton on “Labour;” Maculloch on “Wages and Labour;” Senior on “The Trades Unions of England;” Holyoake on “The History of Co-operation.”

XVI.—ON CONTROVERSY.

As a rule, subjects likely to provoke controversy are better avoided, for, as Philip G. Hamerton has observed, “Men are so unfair in controversy that we best preserve the serenity of the intellect by studiously avoiding all literature that has a controversial tone.” But we cannot understand the great questions which agitate society, nor can we act the part of true citizens if we neglect controversial literature, or to take part in considering questions affecting our own welfare, and the physical and moral welfare of our country. It seems selfish to shut ourselves up in our own little world, and certainly it has a narrowing effect upon our mind to read nothing but what we agree with. As Lord Moncrieff said at the opening of the new Glasgow Club, it is bad for a man never to be contradicted. To find that there are differences of opinion on what he considers the plainest questions is one

of the lessons of life. What he said of the club may also be said of the debating class; it is a great school in which to learn toleration and courtesy, and it supplies means of instruction in those arts which he describes as the science of life—namely, to know how much to say, when to speak, when to listen, and when to be silent. We admit that the way in which most men advocate their own theories, and abuse those who differ from them, tempts a man who values peace of mind to avoid controversial questions; and we are glad to see that the Bishop of Manchester has drawn attention to this guerilla method of opposing parties. “Our best men,” he says, “whether from a dislike of controversy and conflict, or from an over-sensitiveness of nature which is revolted by the tricks and stratagems, and sometimes by the coarseness and vulgarity of public life, are too apt to draw out of the whirling stream, and seek quiet little havens where they may occupy themselves with their own thoughts and favourite pursuits, leaving, as Horace says, the smoke, and the wealth, and the turmoil of the great city far away.”

It is unfortunate for the country when “the better, wiser, nobler minds,” do not put forth their efforts and make their influence felt; for “nothing is more prejudicial to, or destructive of, great results in any of the large departments of life than when a number of small-minded men get together, thinking as nearly as possible alike, and encouraging each other in their short-sightedness of view or pettiness of motive. You can test the accuracy of this statement for yourselves by observing the composition and working of any organisation avowedly formed for partisan purpose, and you will find that ‘the wires’ are generally ‘pulled’ by men who are cunning and subtle and foxy in their nature, rather than by those whose higher spirits will never stoop to a meanness, or a falsehood, or a subterfuge.” How is this disgraceful state of things to

be prevented? Not by holding aloof from political parties, but by bringing our own influence to bear upon the evil, by taking our own share in the formation of public opinion. The stream of foul and abusive language must be purified, and those who contribute to produce it driven forth. But what if hard words be spoken of *us*? To pay a man back in his own coin is the rule of the world, but not the rule of Christ.

It is related that Professor Vince was once arguing at Cambridge against duelling, and some one said, "Well, but Professor, what would you do if any one called you a liar?" "Sir," said the fine old man in his peculiar brogue, "I should tell him to pruv; and if he did pruv it, I should be ashamed of myself; and if he did not, *he* ought to be ashamed of himself." In the discussion of controversial questions, therefore, the fundamental principles of courtesy should be rigorously observed. As Dr. Jethro said, differing from a man in doctrine is no reason why you should pull his house about his ears. In a paragraph appended to the constitution and bye laws of a debating society, members are enjoined "to treat each other with delicacy and respect, conduct all discussions with candour, moderation, and open generosity, avoid all personal allusions and sarcastic language calculated to wound the feelings of a brother, and cherish concord and good fellowship." The spirit of this injunction should pervade the heart of all who take part in controversial questions. Mr. George Jacob Holyoake thus sums up some obvious laws which should be impressed on all who controvert:—

1. To consult in all cases the improvement of those whom we oppose, and to this end argue not for our gratification, or pride, or vanity, but for their enlightenment

2. To invert the vulgar mode of judgment, and not, when we guess at motives, guess the worst, but adopt the best construction the case admits.

3. To distinguish between the personalities which impugn the judgment, and those that criminate character, and never to advance accusations of either kind without distinct and indisputable proof, never to assail character on suspicion, probability, belief, or likelihood.

4. To keep distinct the two kinds of personalities, never mixing up those which pertain to character with those which pertain to judgment.

5. Not to meddle with either, unless some public good is to come out of it. It is not enough that a charge is true ; it must be useful to prefer it before a wise publicist will meddle with it.

6. To dare all personalities ourselves, to brave all attacks, to defy the judgment of mankind, and when we are assailed, unfailingly to respect ourselves, and keep in view the betterance of him whom we oppose rather than our personal gratification.

Before all things, in the consideration of questions which excite controversy, search for principles, pursue Truth, and do this *in Love*. Half the differences in the world arise from ignorance, and chiefly from ignorance of the meaning of terms. For the rest, be quick to affirm truth, but slow to denounce error. Aim to propose, hesitate to oppose. Remember that *construction* is the higher law, *destruction* the lower and baser one. Avoid speculation as you would the plague. Seek for that which is positive, and shun that which is negative.

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APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

EXERCISES FOR PARAPHRASING

I.—MERCY.

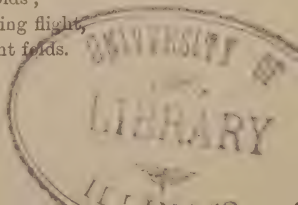
“The quality of mercy is not strained :
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest :
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes :
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest : it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown ;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.
But mercy is above this sceptred sway,
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself ;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice.”

—*Shakespeare.*

II.—THE APPROACH OF NIGHT.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day ;
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea ;
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds ;
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.



III.—AN IRISH SCHOOLMASTER.

"Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way
 With blossomed furze unprofitably gay—
 There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
 The village master taught his little school;
 A man severe he was, and stern to view.
 I knew him well, and every truant knew;
 Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
 The day's disasters in his morning face;
 Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
 At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
 Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
 Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
 Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
 The love he bore to learning was in fault.
 The village all declared how much he knew;
 'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
 Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
 And even the story ran that he could guage.
 In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
 For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;
 While words of learned length and thund'ring sound
 Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around,
 And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
 That one such head could carry all he knew."
—Goldsmith.

IV.—A MONARCH'S DEATH-BED.

"Alone she sat: from hill and wood
 Red sank the mournful sun;
 Fast gush'd the fount of noble blood—
 Treason its worst had done,
 With her long hair she vainly press'd
 The wounds, to stanch their tide—
 Unknown, on that meek humble breast,
 Imperial Albert died."
—Mrs. Hemans.

V.—THE FARMER'S LIFE.

"The farmer's life displays in every part,
 A moral lesson to the sensual heart,
 Though in the lap of plenty, thoughtful still,
 He looks beyond the present good or ill,
 Nor estimates alone one blessing's worth
 From changeful seasons, or capricious earth ;
 But views the future with the present hours,
 And looks for failures as he looks for showers ;
 For casual as for certain want prepares,
 And round his yard the reeking haystack rears,
 Or clover, blossomed lovely to the sight ;
 His team's rich store through many a wintry night."
—Robert Bloomfield.

VI.—THE TRUE SOLITUDE.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
 To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
 Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
 And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been ;
 To climb the trackless mountain all unseen.
 With the wild flock that never needs a fold ;
 Alone o'er steeps and foamin' falls to lean ;
 This is not solitude ; 'tis but to hold
 Converse with nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

But 'midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
 To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
 And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
 With none who bless us, none whom we can bless ;
 Minions of splendour shrinking from distress !
 None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
 If we were not, would seem to smile the less.
 Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued ;
 This is to be alone ; this, this is solitude !

—Byron.

VII.—GREEN OLD AGE.

Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty,
 For in my youth I never did apply
 Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood ;
 Nor did I with unbashful forehead woo
 The means of weakness and debility :
 Therefore my age is as a lusty winter—
 Frosty but kindly.—*Shakespeare.*

VIII.—LOVE.

'Tis better to have loved and lost,
 Than never to have loved at all.

—*Tennyson.*

IX.—THE ILLUMINATED CITY.

"The hills all glow'd with a festive light,
 For the royal city rejoiced by night :
 There were lamps hung forth upon tower and tree,
 Banners were lifted and streaming free ;
 Every tall pillar was wreath'd with fire ;
 Like a shooting meteor was every spire ;
 And the outline of many a dome on high
 Was traced, as in stars, on the clear dark sky.

* * * * *

I saw not the face of a weeper there—
 Too strong, perchance, was the bright lamps' glare !
 I heard not a wail midst the joyous crowd—
 The music of victory was all too loud !
 Mighty it roll'd on the winds afar,
 Shaking the streets like a conqueror's car—
 Through torches and streamers its flood swept by ;
 How could I listen for moan and sigh ? "

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

X.—THE GRAVES OF A HOUSEHOLD

“They grew in beauty side by side,
 They fill'd one home with glee ;
 Their graves are sever'd far and wide,
 By mount, and stream, and sea.

The same fond mother bent at night
 O'er each fair sleeping brow ;
 She had each folded flower in sight—
 Where are those dreamers now ? ”

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

XI.—THE EFFIGIES.

“Warrior ! whose image on thy tomb,
 With shield and crested head,
 Sleeps proudly in the purple gloom
 By the stain'd window shed ;
 The records of thy name and race
 Have faded from the stone,
 Yet, through a cloud of years, I trace
 What thou hast been and done.”

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

XII.—THE SUNBEAM.

Thou art no lingerer in monarch's hall—
 A joy thou art, and a wealth to all !
 A bearer of hope unto land and sea—
 Sunbeam ! what gift hath the world like thee ?

I look'd on the peasant's lowly cot—
 Something of sadness had wrapt the spot ;
 But a gleam of *thee* on its lattice fell,
 And it laugh'd into beauty at that bright spell.

Sunbeam of summer ! oh, what is like thee ?
 Hope of the wilderness, joy of the sea !
 One thing is like thee to mortals given,
 The faith touching all things with hues of heaven !

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

XIII.—TASSO AND HIS SISTER.

“But still and thoughtful at her knee
 Her children stood that hour,
 Their bursts of song and dancing glee
 Hush'd as by words of power.
 With bright fix'd wondering eyes, that gazed
 Up to their mother's face,
 With brows through parted ringlets raised
 They stood in silent grace.”

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

XIV.—THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

“The breaking waves dash'd high
 On a stern and rock-bound coast,
 And the woods against a stormy sky
 Their giant branches toss'd ;

 And the heavy night hung dark
 The hills and waters o'er,
 When a band of exiles moor'd their bark
 On the wild New England shore.

* * * * *

Amidst the storm they sang,
 And the stars neard and the sea ;
 And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
 To the anthem of the free ! ”

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

XV.—THE HOUR OF PRAYER.

Child, amidst the flowers at play,
 While the red light fades away ;
 Mother, with thine earnest eye
 Ever following silently ;
 Father, by the breeze of eve
 Call'd thy harvest-work to leave—
 Pray : ere yet the dark hours be,
 Lift the heart and bend the knee !

—*Mrs. Hemans.*

XVI.—THE ARMADA.

* * * * *

Many a light-fishing bark put out to pry along the coast,
 And with loose rein and bloody spur rode inland many a post,
 With his white hair unbounneted, the stout old sheriff comes ;
 Behind him march the halberdiers ; before him sound the drums ;
 His yeomen round the market cross make clear an ample space ;
 For there behoves him to set up the standard of Her Grace.

* * * * *

The freshening breeze of eve unfurled that banner's many fold ;
 The parting gleam of sunshine kissed that haughty scroll of gold ;
 Night sank upon the dusky beach, and on the purple sea,
 Such night in England ne'er had been, nor e'er again shall be.

—*Lord Macaulay.*

XVII.—THE SLAVE'S DREAM.

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
 His sickle in his hand ;
 His breast was bare, his matted hair
 Was buried in the sand.
 Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep
 He saw his native land.

* * * * *

And then at furious speed he rode
 Along the Niger's bank ;
 His bridle-reins were golden chains,
 And, with a martial clank,
 At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
 Smiting his stallion's flank.

* * * * *

He did not feel the driver's whip ;
 Nor the burning heat of day ;
 For death had illumined the land of sleep,
 And his lifeless body lay
 A worn-out fether, that the soul
 Had broken and thrown away !

—*Longfellow.*

XVIII.—A PSALM OF LIFE.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
 And our hearts, though stout and brave,
 Still, like muffled drums, are beating
 Funeral marches to the grave.

* * * * *

Lives of great men all remind us
 We can make our lives sublime,
 And, departing, leave behind us
 Footprints on the sands of time.

Footprints, that perhaps another,
 Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
 A forlorn and shipwrecked brother
 Seeing, shall take heart again.

—Longfellow.

XIX.—THE SLAVE IN THE DISMAL SWAMP.

In dark fens of the dismal swamp
 The hunted negro lay ;
 He saw the fire of the midnight camp,
 And heard at times a horse's tramp,
 And a bloodhound's distant bay.

* * * * *

A poor old slave, infirm and lame ;
 Great scars deformed his face ;
 On his forehead he bore the brand of shame
 And the rags, that hid his mangled frame,
 Were the livery of disgrace.

* * * * *

On him alone was the doom of pain,
 From the morning of his birth ;
 On him alone the curse of Cain
 Fell, like a flail on the garnered grain,
 And struck him to the earth.

—Longfellow.

XX.—LAPSE OF TIME.

The lapse of time and rivers is the same,
 Both speed their journey with a restless stream ;
 The silent pace with which they steal away
 No wealth can bribe, nor prayers persuade to stay.
 Alike irrevocable both when past,
 And a wide ocean swallows both at last ;
 Though each resembles each in every part,
 A difference strikes at length the musing heart.
 Streams never flow in vain ; where streams abound,
 How laughs the land with various plenty crown'd ;
 But Time, that should enrich the nobler mind,
 Neglected, leaves a weary waste behind.

—*Cowper.*

XXI.—WHAT IS TIME?

I asked an aged man, a man of cares,
 Wrinkled, and curled, and white with hoary hairs
 "Time is the warp of life," he said ; "oh tell
 The young, the fair, the gay to weave it well."
 I asked the ancient, venerable dead,
 Sages who wrote, and warriors who bled ;
 From the cold grave, a hollow murmur flowed,
 "Time sowed the seed we reap in this abode."

—*Rev. J. Marsden.*

PUNCTUATION.

EXERCISES ON THE COMMA, SEMICOLON, AND COLON.

TRUE END OF KNOWLEDGE.

"The greatest error is the mistaking of the true end of knowledge for men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight sometimes for ornament and reputation sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction and most times for lucre and profession but seldom sincerely to

give a true account of their gift of reason to the benefit and use of men as if there were sought in knowledge a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon or a fort or commanding ground for strife or contention or a shop for profit or sale and not a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate."—*Lord Bacon*.

LABOUR, ITS BLESSED RESULTS.

"Bread wine and cloth are things of daily use and great plenty yet notwithstanding acorns water and leaves or skins must be our bread drink and clothing did not labour furnish us with these more useful commodities for whatever bread is more worth than acorns wine than water and cloth and silk than leaves skins or moss that is solely owing to labour and industry the one of these being the food and raiment which unassisted nature furnishes us with the other provisions which our industry and pains prepare for us which how much they exceed the other in value when any one hath computed he will then see how much labour makes the far greater part of the value of things we enjoy in this world."—*Locke*.

LIFE AND ITS END.

"Remember for what purpose you were born and through the whole of life look at its end and consider when that time comes in what will you put your trust not in the bubble of worldly vanity it will be broken not in worldly pleasures they will be gone not in great connections they cannot serve you not in wealth you cannot carry it with you not in rank in the grave there is no distinction not in the recollection of a life spent in a giddy conformity to the silly fashions of a thoughtless and wicked world but in that of a life spent soberly righteously and godly in this present world."—*Bishop Watson*.

MEN.

"Crafty men condemn studies simple men admire them and wise men use them for they teach not their own use that is a wisdom without them and won by observation read not to contradict nor to believe but to weigh and consider some books are to be tasted others swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested reading maketh a full man con-

ference a ready man and writing an exact man and therefore if a man write little he had need have a great memory if he coufer little have a present wit and if he read little have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not histories make men wise poets witty the mathematics subtle natural philosophy deep morals grave logic and rhetoric able to contend."—*Bacon.*

TIME.

"I asked a dying sinner ere the tide
Of life had left his veins Time he replied
I've lost it Ah the treasure and he died
* * * * *

I asked a spirit lost but oh the shriek
That pierced my soul I shudder while I speak
It cried a particle a speck a mite
Of endless years duration infinite.
* * * * *

I asked the mighty angel who shall stand
One foot on sea and one on solid land
By heavens he cried I swear the mystery's o'er
Time was he cried but Time shall be no more."

—*Rev. J. Marsden.*

TIME.

Time is like a fashionable host
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand
And with his arm outstretch'd as he would fly
Grasps in the comer welcome ever smiles
And farewell goes out sighing Let not virtue seek
Remuneration for a thing it was for beauty wit
High birth vigour of bone desert in service
Love friendship charity are subjects all
To envious and calumniating Time.

—*Shakespeare.*

EXCELLENCE.

One of the great secrets of advancing in life is to be ready to take advantage of those opportunities which if a man really possesses superior abilities are sure to present themselves some time or other. As the

poet expresses it There is a tide in the affairs of men an ebbing and flowing of the unstable element on which they are borne and if this be only taken at the flood the full sea is gained on which the voyage of their life may be made with ease and the prospect of a happy issue.—*Theodore.*

WAR.

Many delight in war not in its carnage and woes but for its valour and apparent magnanimity for the self-command of the hero the fortitude which despises suffering the resolution which courts danger the superiority of the mind to the body to sensation to fear why that garland woven that arch erected that festive board spread these are tributes to the warrior.—*Channing.*

THE POOR : THEIR OPPRESSION.

O what avails it missionary to come to me a man condemned to residence in this foetid place where every sense bestowed on me for my delight becomes a torment and where every minute of my numbered days is new mire ad led to the heap under which I lie oppressed but give me my first glimpse of Heaven through a little of its light and air give me pure water he'p me to be clean lighten this heavy atmosphere and heavy life in which our spirits sink and we become the indifferent and callous creatures you too often see us gently and kindly take the bodies of those who die among us out of the small room where we grow to be so familiar with the awful change that even its sanctity is lost to us and teacher then I will hear none know better than you how willingly of Him whose thoughts were so much with the poor and who had compassion for all human sorrow.—*Dickens.*

DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS IN REVISING THEIR COMPOSITIONS.

1. No abbreviations are allowed in prose, and numbers (except in dates) should be expressed in words, not in figures.
2. Numerals must not be used, excepting where speed is necessary.
3. The letters of the same syllable must be written in the same line.
4. Crotchets or brackets which enclose a parenthesis should be used as sparingly as possible. Their place may often be supplied by a comma or a dash.

SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS.

I.—THE USE OF ALCOHOL.

The opponents of alcoholic liquors maintain—

1. That alcohol is a poison.
2. That the use of intoxicating liquors is admitted by the State to be dangerous and hurtful to society.
3. That the tendency of alcohol is to beget an appetite for itself; to weaken the power of restraint.
4. That no one can define moderation.
5. That indulgence produces callousness of conscience.
6. That alcohol is not a food, and that health and strength are not promoted by its use.
7. That, taken in what is held to be moderation, it injures health and shortens life, as shown by the statistics of the United Kingdom Temperance and Provident Institution.
8. That, nationally, it wastes the alimentary products of the earth by causing destruction and theft of property, by weakening the power and desire of productive labour, by entailing loss on commercial and mercantile undertakings, by eating up savings and capital, and by creating three-quarters of the national poverty and criminality, and much of the disease, all of which become a necessary and oppressive burden upon society.
9. That the only cure for national drunkenness is national abstinence.
10. That total abstinence is in accordance with the general principles of Christianity, and the moral maxims of the New Testament.
11. That experience corroborates the testimony of physiology as to the uselessness and injuriousness of alcohol, and that the principle of total abstinence is adopted by wrestlers, runners, and others who engage in competitions requiring steady nerve and great muscular power; that hard manual labour is better performed on total abstinence principles.
12. That alcohol acts more rapidly upon the brain than upon any other organ; hence it has been called the brain poison.

On the other hand, it is contended—

1. That alcohol is a good-creature of God.
2. That it is the abuse, and not the use, which should be condemned.

3. That our Lord turned water into wine, and sanctioned wine drinking.
4. That the evils of excessive drinking are exaggerated.
5. That doctors differ in opinion.
6. That alcohol is fuel to the body.
7. That it aids digestion.
8. That some intoxicant has been used in all ages and by all nations.
9. That we live in such an artificial state of society as to require a stimulant.
10. That total abstinence may be good for *some*, but not for all.
11. That it is an ascetic principle.
12. That the temperate many should not suffer for the intemperate few.

II.—THE USE OF TOBACCO.

It is contended, on the one hand—

1. That tobacco is classed as a narcotico-acrid poison in all works on poisons.
2. That, therefore, it injures all who indulge in it, according to the amount consumed and the strength of the consumer.
3. That physicians of the highest eminence declare its use to be injurious to health and life, causing organic disease, and especially contributing to heart disease, cancer, and consumption.
4. That the "soothi g effect" of tobacco is nothing more than narcotising, or deadening the nerves of sensation, and that the proper remedy for weariness is not narcotism, but rest, change of occupation, or sleep.
5. That, by opposing the nutrition of nerve and muscle, it prevents the growth and development of the body, and that the opinion of Dr. Richardson, F.R.S., that smoking is injurious to health and activity at all ages of life, is borne out by the practice of men who excel in steadiness of nerve and in staying power—H. Man, the champion sculler of the world; Dr. Carver, the world-famous rifle shot; Grace, the cricketer; and Weston, the pedestrian.
6. That the fact that the nerves tolerate the use of tobacco does not prove it harmless, but that nature has a wonderful power of adapting herself to bad conditions.

7. That the money spent on tobacco, amounting to £16,000,000 per annum, is wasted; and that the effect of tobacco on British trade is "a tremendous temptation to men to trade falsely," because they find it easy to make millions of their fellow-creatures to pay six shillings for sixpence worth of stuff, and because "that which goes in any way to make the masses poor can never fail to make the trade of a country poor also."

8. That the habit is inconsistent in a Christian, especially in a Christian minister, who is commanded to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and from "fleshy lusts, which war against the soul;" that the Bible condemns self-indulgence, and commends self-denial; and that the disciples of Christ are commanded, "Deny thyself, and take up thy cross and follow me."

9. That by drying the throat, by expectorating, and by depressing the nerves, it induces thirst and leads to drinking.

10. That smoking tends to enslave the will, and that almost all confirmed smokers wish they had never acquired the practice.

11. That it is dangerous, causing many serious fires and disastrous explosions.

12. That smokers set a bad example, especially to the young.

13. That smoking is an unmanly leaning on a solace to care and labour neither sought nor needed by women.

14. That it tends to take the ambition out of a man, and to make him contented where his divinest duty is discontent.

15. That it is almost impossible to smoke in an inhabited country without causing discomfort to others.

16. That it blunts the moral sense, creates selfishness, causing the smoker, however well-bred, to ignore the rights of non-smokers to pure air and freedom from the stale and the unwelcome fumes of tobacco smoke.

On the other hand, it is affirmed—

1. That tobacco is a good creature of God.
2. That it is poisonous only when taken in excess.
3. That it does *me* no harm.
4. That doctors order it.
5. That it aids digestion.
6. That doctors differ in opinion as to the effects of tobacco.
7. That smoking prevents infection.

8. That it soothes pain and discomfort.
 9. That nearly all nations use it.
 10. That it causes functional disease only.
 11. That as many old men and women smoke, tobacco cannot shorten life.
 12. That smoking is a harmless substitute for drinking.
 13. That there is no command against it in the Bible.
 14. That ministers smoke.
 15. That all great thinkers, poets, and novelists smoke.
 16. That tobacco produces an immense Government revenue.
-

III.—IS A VEGETABLE DIET BEST FOR MAN?

Vegetarianism is based on the principle that man, as a physical, intellectual, and moral being, becomes most completely developed in all his faculties when subsisting upon the direct productions of the vegetable kingdom.

The reasons for entertaining this principle are various with different persons, but are principally based—

1. On the Appointment of man's food at the Creation.—Genesis, i., 29.
2. On the Anatomical Structure of Man, as described by Linnæus, Cuvier, and other eminent naturalists, who express their conviction that man was designed to live on the fruits of the earth.
3. On Physiology, which shows that the purest blood, and the most substantial muscle, sinew, and bone, are produced upon this diet.
4. On Chemistry, as taught by Liebig, and other eminent chemists, who affirm that all nutriment is derived from the vegetable kingdom, where it is found of the purest kind, and in the most suitable proportions.
5. On Economy, which is every way promoted by a system which provides more sustenance for 1*l.*, from farinaceous food, than for 1*s.* from the flesh of animals.
6. On Agriculture, which shows the vastly greater amount of food obtained from vegetable produce, compared with that from animal produce, from the same extent of land.

7. On Psychology, which proves that in proportion as this principle is adhered to the passions are kept in subjection to the moral principle.

8. On Æsthetics, which seek to cherish all that is sublime and beautiful in human nature, to dispense with the slaughterhouse, and to liberate from a degrading occupation the butcher, the grazier, and the cook.

9. On History, which shows that this principle was a rule of life at the happiest—the primeval—period of human existence; and that wherever it has been adopted it has proved itself to be beneficial to the human race.

10. On Humanity, which laments the unnecessary slaughter of animals for food, and which regards “peace on earth” as impossible, and “goodwill among men” as indefinitely remote, while cruelty, even to “animals,” is tolerated and generally prevalent.

11. On the Experience and Testimony of great and good men, in ancient, modern, and present times.

12. On the Individual Consciousness of its truth, which becomes more and more powerful in proportion as the principle is adhered to in practice.

On the other hand, it is held—

1. That farming, apart from the rearing and fattening of cattle, would not pay.

2. That a Vegetarian diet fails to keep up the strength necessary for doing hard work.

3. That persons who have adopted the system have broken down in health, and even died.

4. That a Vegetarian diet would not suit my constitution.

5. That we have canine teeth, which are designed to eat flesh.

6. That if flesh-food be discarded, an adequate supply of manure for the land could not be obtained.

7. That proper material for clothing could not be obtained, if flesh-eating were given up.

8. That animals could not be kept within bounds, if they were not killed for food.

9. That animals were made to be eaten.

10. That we could not obtain leather, &c., if we did not kill.

11. That Vegetarian races are not conquering races.

12. That Vegetarians could not live at the North Pole.

IV.—OUGHT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT TO BE ABOLISHED?

It is contended, on the one hand—

1. That innocent persons have been sacrificed.
2. That Christ came “not to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”
3. That wherever the capital penalty has been substituted by a severe secondary punishment, enforced with comparative certainty, and under common-sense conditions, murders have not increased.

On the other hand, it is contended—

1. That it is a deterrent and a counteractive of murder.
 2. That the Old Testament permitted Capital Punishment.
 3. That the interests of social order require it.
-

V.—PEACE *v.* WAR.

It is contended, on the one hand—

1. That War is inconsistent with the command “Love your neighbour as yourself,” and that “Love your enemies” involves the enemies of our country.
2. That the individual has no right to authorise society to do anything contrary to the law of God; that men connected in societies are under the same moral law as individuals.
3. That all wars are contrary to the will of God, and that the individual has no right to commit to society, nor society to commit to Government, the power to declare war.
4. That international arbitration affords a rational and pacific mode of settling future disputes.
5. That magnanimity and the return of good for evil is better calculated to preserve a wholesome influence over neighbouring semi-civilised people.
6. That the doctrine of preparation for war, to secure peace, is unsound in principle, and at variance with experience.

On the other hand, it is contended—

1. That self-defence is a natural instinct and a natural right.

2. That peace doctrines are right for the Christian in his individual capacity, but wrong when he desires to carry them out as a citizen of the State.

3. That Abraham's example should be followed, not Christ's.

4. That extreme peace views will produce disastrous results.

5. That it is safest to be forearmed.

6. That war is a national purifier.

VI.—VACCINATION.

It is contended, on the one hand.—

1. That Compulsory Vaccination is an unwarrantable interference with the rights of parents.

2. That illness and death by smallpox have increased since vaccination was made compulsory.

3. That defective drainage, overcrowding, badly constructed dwellings, ill-ventilation, unwholesome food, and deficient water supply, are the exciting causes of small-pox epidemics.

4. That Vaccination poisons the blood.

5. That in view of the difference of opinion which prevails among medical men, it is unwise, impolitic, unjust, and tyrannical to enforce Vaccination.

6. That Compulsory Vaccination retards all improvement in the treatment and all discoveries for the prevention of small-pox; that, therefore, it ought to be repealed.

7. That to attack a healthy child under pretence of public health, is a tyrannical usurpation which no medical theory can defend.

On the other hand, it is contended—

1. That before the introduction of Vaccination, small-pox killed 40,000 yearly in England.

2. That thorough Vaccination in infancy is an "almost complete" protection against small-pox.

3. That one out of every three of unvaccinated people die by small-pox.

4. That of perfectly vaccinated people only one dies of every two hundred attacked by small-pox.

QUESTIONS

Designed to aid the student in self-examination, and as suggestive to the teacher of other questions to be used in class :—

1. Can we say that a knowledge of grammar is necessary in order to write correctly when persons who have never studied grammar write and speak correctly ?

2. How did Kossuth obtain his wide command of English ?

3. Why should English be studied more than any other language ?

4. Some hold that the authority of our great writers, Macaulay, Ruskin, and others, is, in grammar, paramount and supreme ; that what they do we must follow, because it is their practice. What answer would you give ?

5. What was Gibbon's method of obtaining information ?

6. What was the secret of Macaulay's accuracy of statement ?
Sir Walter Scott's ?

7. Name some great works which have cost their authors many years of labour.

8. What is the best method of composing ?

9. How can a copious vocabulary be obtained ?

10. How can excellence be acquired ?

11. Students are often urged not to write until their thoughts are matured. What answer does Dr. Johnson give to this advice ?

12. What is genius ?

13. Name some authors who have toiled at their compositions.

14. What is the severest of all tests of writing ?

15. Why did Macaulay bestow so much pains upon his writing ?

16. What is meant by style ?

17. What was Buckle's method of studying style ?

18. What was Binney's ?

19. How did Sir James Mackintosh divide the history of style ?

20. What are the characteristics of the present period ?

21. "A man's style is a transcript of his own character." Illustrate this statement.

22. Give instances of the universality of Carlyle's influence.
23. Distinguish between Carlyle's style and Macaulay's.
24. What is the secret of Macaulay's popularity?
25. Name a good novelist for the study of style.
26. What are the faults of Johnson's style?
27. What did Macaulay hold the first rule of writing?
28. What was Roger Ascham's advice as to writing?
29. What book did Macaulay commend to students for study?
30. Who is the great English classic?
31. Why does Professor Blackie warn students against anxiety about mere style?
32. Show the necessity of a clear style
33. When should words of Anglo-Saxon origin be used? When Latin?
34. Why did Robert Hall prefer "happiness" to "felicity"?
35. Whom did Southey consider one of the best writers having a Saxon basis?
36. What are the characteristics of a good style?
37. What quality is of the first importance?
38. What is the opposite of perspicuity?
39. What does clearness imply?
40. Why should simple words be used?
41. Distinguish between *special* and *general terms*.
42. Give illustrations of each.
43. What is fine writing?
44. What newspaper uses an inflated style?
45. Give an illustration of vague language.
46. What does brevity mean?
47. How is brevity violated?
48. Give examples of circumlocution.
49. How can skill in condensation be gained?
50. When would circumlocution be permissible?
51. How is purity of language regulated?
52. What are we to avoid in order to write with purity?
53. When are technical terms valuable?
54. When may foreign words be used?
55. When may new words be coined?
56. What is energy of style opposed to?
57. What does it imply?
58. How may it be produced?

59. When does *a* become *an*?
60. Where should adverbs be placed?
61. When should the comparative form of the adjective be used, and when the superlative?
62. Where should the relative pronoun be placed?
63. Give an example of the correct use of *with* and *from*.
64. What is punctuation?
65. Why should a writer for the press punctuate his own composition?
66. How may ambiguity be avoided in the construction of sentences.
67. What are the principal marks of punctuation?
68. State when they should be used, and give illustrations.
69. What is meant by paraphrasing?
70. What is its educational value?
71. What are the rules for paraphrasing?
72. How would you begin to write an essay?
73. What should be given in writing a biographical essay?
74. Why should we take part in controversial questions?
75. How should we treat our opponents in debate?



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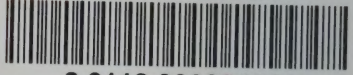
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